

THE GLORY OF THE FIRST APOSTLES
AS SEEN IN MODERN TIMES ...

BLESSED JOHN
The Wonderworker

SAINT JOHN MAXIMOVITCH of Shanghai and San Francisco (1896–1966) is believed by Orthodox Christians all over the world to be the holiest man of the twentieth century. Manifesting many contrasting forms of sanctity, he was at once a God-inspired theologian and a “Fool-for-Christ,” a zealous missionary hierarch and a feeder of the poor, a severe ascetic and a loving father to orphans. Like Moses, he delivered his flock from oppression, bringing it from communist China to the free world; like the first apostles, he was given power from God to heal wounded souls and ailing bodies. A man of intense and ceaseless prayer, he was a genuine Holy Elder in the tradition of the great Russian *starsi*. Piercing the veil of time and space, he would mystically hear and answer people’s thoughts before they would express them. Now in heaven, he continues to visit and pray for those who call upon him, as is attested by miracles and healings which are now being chronicled around the world.

Blessed John the Wonderworker includes numerous source-materials on Saint John’s life, a pictorial biography and one hundred personal testimonies of his sanctity. Through a detailed look at the experience of one man, this book provides a key for those seeking a life of true holiness in our times.

This is an exact reproduction of the 1987 edition, which helped prepare the way for Saint John’s canonization in 1994.

ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA BROTHERHOOD

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BLESSED JOHN

The Wonderworker



Blessed John the Wonderworker

A Preliminary Account of the Life and Miracles of Archbishop John Maximovitch

by Fr. Seraphim Rose and Abbot Herman

*Compiled and Edited by
the St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood*



**ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA BROTHERHOOD
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Preface to the First Edition

*The righteous shall be in everlasting
remembrance. (Psalm 111:6)*

One of the most striking things in the life of the Orthodox Church in recent years has been the extraordinary response of Orthodox believers in many Local Churches and jurisdictions to the remarkable life of the reposed hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, Archbishop John Maximovitch, who served the Church as bishop first of Shanghai in the Far East, then of Western Europe, and finally of Western America and San Francisco. This righteous man, who even in our cold and faint-hearted century, was like unto the great Orthodox hierarchs of old, has inspired such love and veneration among Orthodox Christians, many of whom never knew him when he was alive, that with his death in 1966 one may say that a whole new chapter in his "life" has opened: precisely that of his veneration by the Orthodox faithful.

The present volume is a preliminary collection of materials in English on Archbishop John, such as have appeared in *The Orthodox*

Word journal since 1966. These materials include a brief biography and several more detailed chapters on his life; but primarily they are an account of the world-wide veneration of Archbishop John which has risen in these years, as well as of Archbishop John's own response to this veneration; his miracles and manifestations to those who call upon his prayers with faith and know that he is not "dead" at all, but alive in God and able to answer our heartfelt entreaties. Inspired by the Russian-language *Chronicle of Bishop Savva of Edmonton, (St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, Platina, 1976)*, the present volume includes translations of several of the chapters of this book, but it is rather broader in its scope and includes much material (including new testimonies and miracles which have occurred since 1976) that is not contained in the Russian volume.

In the early Christian centuries there were many books detailing the achievements of God's righteous men and the veneration of the faithful for them: the *Lausiac History* of Palladius, the *Spiritual Meadow* of John Moschus, the *Dialogues* of St. Gregory the Great, the many *Patericons* and individual saints. In our poor days the righteous have become few, and there are not many books about them. May this *Chronicle* serve to inspire the Orthodox Christians of these last times who, it may be, have become faint-hearted in their labors of piety; may it show them that, despite our own weaknesses and failings, *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever* (Heb. 13:8), and that there is nothing

more pleasing to God and more fruitful for the salvation of men than the righteous life in Christ of which Archbishop John is such a shining example.

Father Herman
St. Herman of Alaska Monastery
Platina, California
Christmas, 1979

Preface to the Third, Revised Edition

In the twenty years since the repose of our beloved founder and inspirer, Blessed John Maximovitch, our St. Herman Brotherhood has labored to spread the good news of his sanctity. His veneration by the faithful is now more widespread than ever before, as are the miracles he continues to perform for those who entreat his intercession. Recently we published the reminiscences of one of his spiritual daughters (in *The Orthodox Word* nos. 123-124), and in the wonderful response we received there was one common element: the readers said that they could not help but weep when they read about Blessed John's life. Indeed, was not this how people responded to this marvelous man of prayer when he was still a pilgrim on earth? When he would walk into prisons, hardened criminals who had never seen or heard of him would inexplicably break out into tears. A power emanated from him that drew people to him, much more than did even the countless miracles he performed. This

was the power of Christian love, that awesome mystery which the world cannot understand but at the same time cannot resist. Nothing can conquer it, for its source is the very Creator of all. Being in mystical communion with God, Blessed John overflowed with this love. And the love he gave is, after twenty years, still being reciprocated as it is poured out from the hearts of believers all over the world.

Anyone who acknowledges even the idea of sanctity cannot deny the inescapable fact that Archbishop John is a Saint. He has already in a sense been "canonized" by the piety of the faithful, which in the Orthodox Church is the ultimate criterion for sainthood. One of his closest spiritual children, Archimandrite Mitrophan, zealously propagated blessed John's glorification as a true Saint of the latter times. Before his repose in January of 1986, Fr. Mitrophan repeated his appeal to our Brotherhood, asking that we continue to spread his elder's veneration. And so, with the obvious help of God, we are now coming out with the third printing of our book, *Blessed John*: a preliminary account of Archbishop John's life and miracles. We offer it to contemporary Christians in order to strengthen their faith in the difficult times ahead. And we are thankful to all the humble, God-loving souls whose number is too great to mention here individually, but without whose support we would not have been able to do our work. Finally, we ask that all who read this little volume raise their hearts in prayer for the unworthy publishers.

May our God, Who is so glorious in His
Saints, bless us one and all.

Abbot Herman
St. Herman Brotherhood
New Valaam
Annunciation, 1986

Part I

**MATERIALS ON
THE LIFE OF
BLESSED JOHN**



Chapter 1

Bishop Savva:

First Chronicler of Blessed John's Life and Miracles

Orthodox life, whether in parishes or monasteries or deserts, proceeds on its normal quiet course for the most part unobserved, being made up of the daily struggles of ordinary sinners who yet hope in their salvation. But by God's grace a part of this hidden life in Christ is made manifest in the outstanding examples of God's action among men and holy exploits undertaken in His name. The aim of these chronicles, whether of a single Saint or a whole people, is to edify and inspire the new generation of Christian strugglers, who often grow faint and are tempted to relax in the battle to reach their heavenly homeland.

Especially in our days of feeble faith is the temptation strong to relax or give up entirely the struggle for salvation, and this century for Orthodox Christians sometimes seems, more than anything else, a chronicle of failures, material rather for idle gossip than

for a worthy record. Where are the events in our time worthy of a chronicler like the great St. Nestor of the Kiev Caves?

And yet our inglorious century too is providing citizens for the heavenly kingdom, and even heroes of faith. They do not appear in outward glory and splendor, and one must look harder to find them than in earlier centuries; but they do exist, and they also await their chronicler.

One such chronicler of our times was the late Bishop Savva of Edmonton (+1973), who was so struck by the life of Archbishop John that he spent the last years of his life collecting materials for a whole book on him. Many of these materials were published in the church periodical *Orthodox Russia*, but much material remained unpublished at his death, and he did not have the opportunity to put all that he had into proper order as he wished. On his death he left this material and his unfinished book to the Saint Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, which has taken as its sacred duty to continue and complete his work to the best of its ability. The book which has resulted is not a Life of Archbishop John, but rather precisely a *chronicle* of his veneration and of the manifestation of his holy life and miracles to the Orthodox Christians of these latter times. The first volume of this work was issued (in Russian) for the tenth anniversary of the repose of Archbishop John under the title: *A Chronicle of the Veneration of Archbishop John Maximovitch*.

The *Chronicle* is valuable first of all not as much for the actual material it gives as

for its evaluation of Archbishop John. So often it happens in our times that true righteous ones finish their course in such humility and lack of outward glory that their memory soon fades into virtual oblivion and the benefit of their holy lives is largely lost for those who follow them.

A worthy chronicler like Bishop Savva can therefore do a great service to the Church precisely by his proper evaluation of the holy man he has taken for his concern. For this evaluation of Archbishop John, Bishop Savva does not trust merely his own opinions or feelings, but calls on many venerable witnesses. Thus, whole chapters or parts of chapters are devoted to testimony of Vladika John's holy life by Metropolitan Philaret (ch. 20), Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky (chs. 20-21), Archbishop Averky (ch. 1), Archbishop Nikon (ch. 29), Archimandrite Constantine (ch. 7), Bishop Nicholas Velimirovitch (ch. 13), Archpriest Valery Lukianov (ch. 22), the church historian Nicholas Talberg (ch. 23), and (the greater part of the book) the simple church people who experienced his love and the miracles worked by his prayers. Another very valuable part of the book is devoted to passages from the Holy Fathers and parallels from the Lives of Saints which shed light on Vladika John's sanctity.

But the most endearing part of the *Chronicle* is the testimony of Vladika Savva himself. In every word of his, and especially in his sermons on Vladika John (chs. 2, 3, 11), one feels the boundless love and

veneration of the younger hierarch for the older, his fervor to communicate his *value* to the church people who cannot afford to lose such a treasure, and also his sorrow that in our times of the cooling of faith and love not many will understand him, or see the need for such fervor. In his zeal for the memory of a man who was a true fool for Christ's sake in the midst of our 20th-century life (even church life) of calculation and petty logic—Bishop Savva himself became a fool for Christ, caring nothing for the opinions of this world as long as he could speak the truth concerning one who lived by the totally different standards of the Orthodox spiritual life.

I.

*The Necrology of Bishop Savva**

by Archbishop Athanasius of Argentina

We have received the sad news that on January 30, 1973, Bishop Savva (Sarachevitch) died in the city of Edmonton, Canada. Having served as Bishop of Edmonton since 1958, he had been in retirement since September, 1971.

Bishop Savva was born on February 22, 1902, in the city of Lyutavitch in Yugoslavia (Belgrade region). In 1923 he finished the higher school in the city of Chachak-Kragujevatz, and then he entered the department of Law of the University of Belgrade, after

* *Nasha Strana*, Buenos Aires, no.1198, Feb. 6, 1973.

finishing which he occupied the positions of lawyer and judge in the cities of Trelog, Chachak, Gnilas, and Belgrade. In the intervals between his duties as judge he began to study in the Department of Theology at the University of Belgrade, and he finished this course in 1943.

Bishop Savva was a highly educated and a just man. He did not fear or hesitate to accuse injustice and falsehood.

Finding himself in the emigration after the Second World War, he came to Buenos Aires at the beginning of 1948 and soon went to Bishop Leonty in Paraguay to the monastery which the latter established there.

There Bishop Leonty tonsured him a monk and ordained him deacon on the feast of the Annunciation in the same year. From Paraguay he returned to Buenos Aires, where Archbishop Panteleimon of Argentina and Buenos Aires ordained him priest on August 15, 1949 (o.s., the Dormition of the Mother of God). He was assigned to the Holy Resurrection Cathedral in Buenos Aires.

In December, 1956, Bishop Athanasius of Argentina assigned him as priest of the Holy Protection Church in Temperley, where he served until his departure for New York in August, 1958.

By decree of the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Church Outside of Russia he was consecrated bishop of Edmonton, a vicar of the Canadian Diocese. His consecration took place in the Synodal church in New York City on September 15/28, 1958.

The reposed Bishop Savva had great

veneration for Archbishop John Maximovitch of San Francisco and wrote a number of articles on him in *Orthodox Russia*. Among the hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia he was an outstanding archpastor in his education, eloquence, and zealous service to the Church.

Two weeks before his death, Bishop Savva wrote a letter to his friend in Buenos Aires in which, among other things, he wrote: "As for me, glory be to God, I am living quietly. I would not want to change my situation. St. Gregory the Theologian wrote: 'For those who leave thrones do not lose God, but they shall have a See above, which is much higher and more secure than these Sees below.'"

Eternal memory to the reposed hierarch.

II.

Bishop Savva, Zealot of Spiritual Renewal

Some thirty years ago Bishop Savva, then a practicing judge in Yugoslavia, abandoned his worldly career and consciously entered upon the path of service to Christ's Church. Finding himself abroad after the Second World War, he entered the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, and to his very death he served this Church with a rare devotion and zeal, revealing himself not only as a loving and much-loved pastor, but also as an awakener of the Orthodox conscience.

Having become a bishop, his concern

reached out to the whole of Russia abroad, and through the pages of *Orthodox Russia* he tried to awaken the Orthodox Russian people to an awareness of the apocalyptic nature of the times and of their calling and responsibility to be *conscious* Orthodox believers. In the early years of his episcopacy he called for the formation of "Brotherhoods of Spiritual Renewal," and later he placed special emphasis on the need for redoubled prayer for suffering Russia. His fervent appeals did awaken some response, but in the end the result was not too great, doubtless owing chiefly to the extremely unfavorable conditions of the Russian emigration, overwhelmed as it is by worldly cares and temptations.

Bishop Savva's concern extended also to new converts to Orthodoxy, and in particular he entered into contact with and inspired many English-speaking converts in America and Canada.

In the last years of his life, Bishop Savva undertook a new labor of love and zeal, and it is very likely for this that he will be most remembered. He early recognized the great spiritual stature of Archbishop John Maximovitch and was one of those hierarchs who gathered around him and acknowledged him as their spiritual leader; and when the need arose, he came to Archbishop John's defense, considering it providential that he could use his knowledge of law in order to help him when he was unjustly brought to court in San Francisco.

In the first months after Archbishop

John's repose in 1966, there appeared in the Russian press many personal testimonies of his holiness and ascetic life and of what he meant to individual members of his flock. Soon, however, these began to appear less frequently, and it was evident that their significance was limited and chiefly personal and that by themselves they would not preserve the memory of the holy hierarch beyond the lifetimes of those who already knew him. It was then that Bishop Savva began to publish his own material on Archbishop John. This appeared in the form of fifteen articles in *Orthodox Russia* in 1967 and 1968, and it was soon apparent that this was material with a different dimension and purpose. In the place of limited individual memories, he offered a collection of personal testimonies, carefully selected and verified, which were arranged so as to point out various characteristics and aspects of Vladika John's life and sanctity. More than this, Bishop Savva, with his great love for and knowledge of the Holy Fathers (at his death he left a collection of patristic texts written out in his own hand), interspersed these testimonies with citations from the lives and writings of the Holy Fathers, in order to make clear the whole Orthodox tradition of sanctity in which Vladika John had his definite place.

In these articles Bishop Savva discusses and places in patristic context such aspects of Vladika John's sanctity as his miraculous healings and exorcisms; his strict asceticism and sleeplessness; his appearance

in dreams after his repose; his clairvoyance; striking incidents such as the visible fire which once appeared when he served the Divine Liturgy; the bitter persecution which he suffered; and even that which very few as yet have come to value in him, perhaps because almost never before has this kind of sanctity been joined to hierarchical rank: his foolishness for Christ's sake. Bishop Savva in these articles offered in effect a brief course in patristic education to the Orthodox people, and thereby he perhaps sowed seeds that will eventually bring much greater fruits than all his other praiseworthy labors for spiritual renewal.

Bishop Savva's own comments on Vladika John in these articles are revealing and significant. In one of them he writes: "I write about Vladika John and everything somehow becomes pleasant in my soul. I would not want any important information about him to be lost" (*Orthodox Russia*, 1967, no. 16). He was constantly astounded by the wonder of such sanctity in today's world: "What great power was revealed in this small, thin body! What apostolic zeal and burning of spirit! And in general, what a miracle of the contemporary world he was!" (1967, no. 6) At times he reproaches the insensitivity and coldness of the Orthodox people: "Oh, what a great righteous man and man of prayer we had and did not know how to value him!" (1967, no. 7) For him Vladika John is more alive and accessible after his death than before: "A wondrous miracle: Vladika, even after death, comforts his flock, those who

revere him, and all who come to his grave" (1967, no. 14). Bishop Savva openly compares Vladika John to the great saints of the past and places him in their midst: "And so, at that time there was St. Simeon the Stylite [who exorcised demons], and now Vladika John. That was in ancient times, but now it is in our own day. The power of God, just as through the holy Stylite, so now also through Vladika John, has acted and exorcised the evil spirit of the torturer. *Wondrous is God in His Saints, the God of Israel* (1967, no. 17)."

It may be that Bishop Savva saw in Vladika John a key, as it were, to that spiritual renewal for which he labored; doubtless he saw in his glorification a source of great spiritual strength for the faithful. In one of his articles in *Orthodox Russia* (1967, no. 19), Bishop Savva pointed out the little-known fact that it was a Serbian hierarch, Bishop Nicholas Velimirovitch, who in large measure gave the impetus for the canonization of St. John of Kronstadt by the Russian Church Outside of Russia. He thought the time was already ripe for this after the First World War, and by the 1930's a service and akathist had been written to St. John and published for private use by the faithful; but it was especially Bishop Nicholas' letter to Metropolitan Anastassy in 1952 which led to the formation of a canonization committee (under the chairmanship of Archbishop John) and, eventually, to the canonization itself in 1964. And now it is also a Serbian hierarch, Bishop Savva—who, however, had a devotion

to the Russian Church and people which is not surpassed even among Russian hierarchs!—who has given the first impetus for the future canonization, in God's time, of Archbishop John, an event for which he was consciously laying the foundation and preparing the Orthodox people. Thus he himself becomes a chapter in the life and glorification of Blessed Archbishop John!

At his death, which occurred on the feast day of one of his beloved Holy Fathers whom he was always quoting, St. Anthony the Great, Bishop Savva left unpublished materials on Archbishop John, having hoped one day to publish a whole book on him. These materials he left to the Saint Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, thus giving us his blessing to continue this work for him.

The following sermon well shows the great love and zeal of Bishop Savva toward the holy hierarch, and his eloquence in expressing them (from *Orthodox Russia*, 1966, no. 16):

III.

Sermon of Bishop Savva

Spoken on the 40th day
after the repose of Archbishop John

Fathers, friends, brethren and sisters, hear me. I have come to pay respect to the newly-reposed slave of God, Vladika Archbishop John. I have come to pray together with you for the repose of his soul on this signifi-

cant and decisive fortieth day, the day when the place is determined where his soul will dwell until the general and terrible judgment of God, at which the fate of each of us will be finally decided for all eternity. I have come to look once more at this city in which he lived, at the holy temple in which he prayed, at the streets where he walked, at the hospitals in which he visited the sick. I have come to look once more upon his flock which he loved so much, upon the youth whom he so wondrously attracted to the Church of God. I have come, not without grief, I say, to this place of his sufferings of soul, the place where he bore his crown of thorns, his difficult cross.

I was with him from the beginning of his sufferings here, and I helped him while he was alive as well as I could and knew how; and would it be honorable to leave him now without respect, without prayer together with you for his soul which suffered so much, on this day which is so great for him?! He was my friend and father and—forgive me—my heart is there, in this confining tomb, in the grave with Vladika. My heart weeps over my father! However, these tears are only tribute-money paid to our human nature. It is not right to give oneself over to excessive sorrow for the reposed, for *the remembrance of the righteous is with praises* (Prov. 10:7). Let us marvel at the greatness of God: how wondrous is God in His Saints!

Yes, the death of the righteous is the end of the battle with the passions of the

flesh; after death the strugglers are glorified and receive victorious crowns.

Who, if not Vladika John, mastered his body? As you know, he did not give it rest day or night. Only a shadow remained of it. His bodily members were worn out from fasting and from the labor of vigil. Grant him, O Lord, the eternal stronghold and lead him into Thy eternal light!

With the hope of the ancient saints he labored fervently to give rest to those sorrowing and in need. May he repose in Thy harbor, O Lord!

Sorrow has come to us: we have been deprived of him who took care of us. I received a letter from him in which his concern for me was manifested. Perhaps this was the last letter that he wrote in his life—he wrote it on July 1st, and on the seal of the Seattle post office on the envelope is indicated the date of July 2nd, in the afternoon, that is, the day of his repose.

But we must know that the hour of his departure was determined by the Lord; wherefore, restrain your tears and raise your voice in praise of this struggler!

O our beloved Vladika! The Church remembers your zeal, for you were her true archpastor, and by your prayers you saved your flock!

You were a priest like unto Aaron; you were a chief-priest like unto Moses; Joseph did you emulate in continence, and in zeal Elias.

Always before your eyes was the image of your Lord; with indefatigable zeal you

strove toward the goal which the Lord pointed out to you; wherefore as His faithful slave the Lord called you to Himself and separated you from us.

Your working day did not end with night; night was the field of your labors of prayer. Therefore, it may be that it happened not without God's Providence that we sang your funeral and buried you at night.

Now you no longer bear the burden of your body; from henceforth your lot is in Paradise.

Who does not weep over your departure? Who does not rejoice over the crown which you have obtained? Praise be to Him Who chose you!

Your voice has become silent for us, but may your blessings be poured out abundantly on us! We are deprived of seeing your face, but may your name shine out among us!

You have left us orphans, our father, but may your prayer be for us a mother, and for its sake may the all-praised Trinity protect our souls! From that holy altar at which you served holily and reverently, may the glorification of your memory ascend from ages unto ages!

May your prayer overshadow your flock! Pray for its salvation. May all who have now gathered to pay respect to your memory receive the blessing of your prayers; may they one day rejoice with you in the heavenly bridal chamber, and may they magnify and glorify Him Who chose you!

O righteous God! With the Saints grant rest to the much-suffering soul of Thy slave,

our beloved Archbishop John! Amen.

IV.

From Bishop Savva's Chronicle

MAN OF PRAYER

While Vladika John was still alive, a woman in San Francisco told me much that was interesting about him. I asked her to write down some of what she had said. Here is some of what she sent:

"The Chinese Communists did not allow my husband, Gregory Popov, out of China when he was going to come to me three years ago [about 1958]. They gave him injections of tetanus instead of smallpox, and he died of blood poisoning in Tientsin. I wept bitterly and fell into despondency. At this time Vladika John was in San Francisco. After the All-night Vigil he came up to me and said: 'I have heard of your sorrow.' I burst into bitter tears. Vladika went, took a candle, prayed, and placed it on the table of remembrance, and then came up to me and firmly made the sign of the Cross over me. At that moment I felt as though an enormous weight had been removed from my head and my whole body, and it became so easy for me, and I completely stopped weeping and even forgot my sorrow.

"Another incident, in San Francisco: Mrs. Pribylovskaya was very upset and wept over her husband, who was to be operated on. The night before the operation she came to Vladika. He immediately went with her to

the hospital and prayed for a long time over her husband. In the morning the doctor ordered the patient to be brought into the operating room. Here the surgeon examined the patient and said that he was well, the tumor had disappeared, and no operation was necessary. The doctors said it was God Who had healed him. Mrs. Pribylovskaya and her husband are both well and are working.

"Dr. Bill told me the following: In the Russian Hospital in Shanghai there was a critically ill woman and she begged everyone to call Vladika John so that he would give her Holy Communion and pray for her. The doctor told the nurses not to disturb Vladika, since the sick woman was dying. The next day, to the astonishment of all, Vladika came to the hospital and went right to the ward where the sick woman was. 'Why are you preventing me from praying?' he said to her. 'Right now I have to serve Liturgy.' He gave her the Holy Mysteries, blessed her, and left. She fell asleep and after this began to quickly recover."

G. Baranova-Popova

What can one say to all this? The impression is striking, and therefore with great sadness I say: Oh, what a great righteous one and man of prayer we had, and did not know how to value him!

A CASE OF EXORCISM IN OUR OWN DAYS

Here we print an account of the healing of a demon-possessed man in Shanghai by our man of prayer, Vladika John, in the years

when he was Bishop of Shanghai (1934-1949).

"Once I came to the cemetery to pray at the grave of my mother. I stood reflecting: which is better, to live or to die? Suddenly I heard a man's voice: 'Good morning!' I shuddered from the unexpectedness of it. This man asked me who was buried here. I replied that it was my mother. He continued the conversation. "That is normal, that your mother lies here; but for me it is my son who lies here. He was young, under thirty years old, and I rejoice that he has already died."

"I was thunderstruck, hearing what he said, and of course I asked: 'But why do you rejoice?' He replied that he rejoiced because his son was healed before his death from demonic possession and, thanks to Vladika John, he died a true Christian.

"I asked him: 'You mean that your son had a nervous ailment?'

"'No, my son was possessed. He hated everything holy, all holy icons and crosses he tore up into the tiniest pieces and very much rejoiced over this. I would bring him to Vladika John and he made him stand on his knees and put on his head the Cross, and sometimes the Gospel. My son would be very sad after this, and sometimes he would run out of the Cathedral. But Vladika told me not to despair. He would continue to pray for him, and in time he would recover; but for the time being let him continue to be treated by doctors. "And do not take it so hard," he said; "the Lord is not without mercy."'

"Thus it dragged on for several years,

he related. The son was taken to Minchon (a home for the psychologically ill), and sometimes he was let out to go home, and then his father would again lead him to the Cathedral. Sometimes he was given Holy Communion, when his father would see that he was in such a state that he would not run out of the church immediately after receiving Communion in order to spit it out. Just as before, he would tear up crosses and icons, but he became somehow calmer, and he began to read the Gospel. The father understood that the prayers of Vladika John had reached God.

"He was home one time, lying in bed and reading the Gospel. His face was so bright and joyful. And he said: 'You know, Papa, we have to be in Minchon; I have to go there; there the Spirit of God will cleanse me from the spirit of evil and darkness, and then I will depart to the Lord. Let's go quickly and make the arrangements.'

"The father immediately went to all the offices and insisted that his son be accepted, since earlier they had told him that his son was not dangerous for the people around him and he could be kept at home. He was helped in everything by the emigrant committee and by a Chinese doctor whose wife had helped Russians a great deal and had even adopted a Russian child.

"They brought him to Minchon (25 or 30 miles from Shanghai). In two days the father came to visit him and saw that his son was absolutely impossible: he was restless, constantly moving on his bed; and then he suddenly began to shout: 'Don't do it; don't

come near me, I don't want you!'

The father looked, and looked, and went into the corridor to look some more, to see who was coming and where, who it was that had disturbed the spirit of evil that was in his son. The corridor was long and looked out on an alley. There he saw an automobile, and from it Vladika John had come out and was heading for the hospital. The father went into the ward again and saw that his son was writhing on the bed and shouting: 'Don't come near. I don't want you. Go away, go away!' Then he became calm and began quietly to pray, whispering the prayers. The father likewise began to pray. At this time he heard a door open and close somewhere, and he heard steps in the corridor.

"The sick man jumped up from bed and ran along the corridor in his pajamas. Meeting Vladika, he fell down before him on his knees and wept, begging him to chase out of him the spirit of evil.

"Vladika laid his hands on his head and read prayers, then he took him by the shoulders and led him into the ward, where he also laid him on the bed and prayed over him. Then he gave him Holy Communion.

"When Vladika had left, the sick man said: 'Well, now at last my healing has been accomplished, and now the Lord will take me to Himself. Papa, take me quickly; I must die at home.'

"When the father brought him home, he was so happy to see everything in his own room, and especially the icons, and he began to pray and took the Gospel.

"The next day he began to hurry his father to call a priest quickly to give him Holy Communion once more.

"The father said that he had just received Communion the day before, but the son objected and said: 'Papa, quickly, quickly, or you won't be in time.'

"The father called a priest. The priest came and gave the son Communion once more. And while the father accompanied the priest, Father Sergius Borodin, to the stairway and returned, his son's face had already changed and become somehow old. Again he smiled to him, but already without movement. And only his eyes, as it were, said: 'Papa, farewell, how good it is!'

"I asked who had made such a splendid memorial for his son. He replied that it was the Chan family, Chinese people who were his good friends and very kind people. Later I became acquainted with these Chinese people, and they confirmed all of this for me."

Maria Y.

This incident is very interesting. It sometimes happens that evil spirits are the instruments of God's wrath, and God allows them to cause suffering to people for their sins, so that at least through suffering they might come to self-awareness, repent of their sins, and be corrected.

In the *Prologue* (Lives and Sayings of Saints) under September 1st we read the following story:

Once a certain priest was sitting in the church porch and reading the Holy Gospel.

While reading, suddenly he felt as if some kind of dark and ominous cloud had surrounded him, and at the same time the light was extinguished in his eyes and his mind was darkened, and he was paralyzed in all his members and became dumb.

And he remained in this frightful affliction for nine years and suffered so much that, lying on his bed, he could not turn from side to side without someone's help. Meanwhile, it happened that finally his relatives, having heard of the miracles which St. Simeon the Stylite was performing, took the priest and carried him to the Saint. And when they had not quite reached the monastery in which Simeon was living and had lain down to rest, at this time it was revealed from above to the Saint, who was standing at prayer, concerning the affliction of the priest and that he was approaching. Then the Saint called one of his disciples, gave him holy water, and said: "Take this water and hasten quickly out of the monastery. Near it you will find a sick priest being carried on a bed; sprinkle him with holy water and tell him the following: Sinful Simeon tells you, 'In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, arise and leave your bed and come to Simeon yourself.'" The disciple went and did as the Saint had indicated to him. The priest immediately became well, came to the Saint and fell at his feet. Simeon said to him, "Arise and do not fear. Even if the devil has brought sorrow upon you for nine years, still God's love for mankind did not forget you and did not allow you to perish utterly. Know

also that the devil was allowed to offend you because you stood in the holy altar without fear and reverence, because you listened to slanderers and those who were slandered by them you deprived of Holy Communion without seeking out the truth. Thereby you sorrowed God and greatly rejoiced the devil, under whose dark power you thus fell. But now, seeing that God's love for mankind and His mercies have been multiplied in you, release those whom you saddened by excommunication, and just as God has had mercy on you, do you likewise to them." After these words the priest departed from the Saint with great joy and fulfilled all that he had commanded him.

And so, at that time there was St. Simeon the Stylite, and now Vladika John. That was in ancient times, but now it is in our own day. The power of God, just as through the holy Stylite, so now also through Vladika John, has acted and exorcised the evil spirit of the torturer.

Wondrous is God in His Saints, the God of Israel!

Chapter 2

The Vita Prima of Blessed John

1896-1966

Barely six months ago* there reposed in the Lord a hierarch of the Church of Christ whose life so extraordinarily radiated the Christian virtues and the grace of the Holy Spirit as to make of him a pillar of true Orthodoxy and an example of Christian life that is of universal significance. In Archbishop John there were united three kinds of the highest Christian activity that are rarely found together: that of a bold and esteemed Prince of the Church; an ascetic in the tradition of the pillar-saints, taking upon himself the severest self-mortification; and a fool for Christ's sake, instructing men by a "foolishness" that was beyond the wisdom of this world.

The following account cannot begin to be called a complete life of Archbishop John; it is only a selection of the material that is already available, presented in the form of a preliminary sketch of the life of this holy

* This Life was written in 1966.

man. It was compiled by the St. Herman Brotherhood, which was organized with the blessing of Archbishop John (who wished to see Father Herman canonized after Father John of Kronstadt) for the mission of the printed word. Now, in fulfillment of this mission, it is our duty to speak the truth about this man who was, in our dark times when genuine Christianity has almost vanished, an embodiment of the life in Christ.

The account is based primarily upon personal acquaintance and upon the testimony of witnesses known to the compilers. Archbishop John throughout is referred to by the term Russians use to speak of and address bishops: *Vladika*. In English this is rendered "Master," but the Russian word, when used by itself, implies a familiarity and endearment that are wanting in the nearest English equivalent. For those who knew him, Archbishop John will always be simply *Vladika*.

I

Archbishop John was born on June 4, 1896, in the village of Adamovka in the province of Kharkov in southern Russia. He was a member of the Little Russian noble family of Maximovitch, to which St. John of Tobolsk also had belonged. His father, Boris, was a marshal of nobility in one part of Kharkov province; and his uncle was rector of Kiev University. He received at baptism the name of Michael, his heavenly protector being the Archangel Michael. He was a sickly child and ate little.

He received his secondary education in the Poltava Military School, which he attended from 1907 to 1914. He loved this school and remembered it fondly in later years. Upon completing military school he entered Kharkov Imperial University in the faculty of law, from which he graduated in 1918, before it was seized by the Soviets. He was then assigned to the Kharkov District Court, where he served at the time Hetman Skoropadsky was ruling the Ukraine and while the Volunteer Army was there.

Kharkov, where Vladika spent his formative years, was a true town of Holy Russia, and the young Michael, impressionable to revelations of holiness, acquired there the pattern of his future life. There were two miraculous Icons of the Mother of God, the *Oseryanskaya* and *Eletskaya*, which were carried in a religious procession twice a year from the monasteries where they were treasured to the Dormition Cathedral. In the Protection Monastery, in a frescoed grotto underneath the altar, lay the remains of the holy Archbishop Melety Leontovitch, who after his death in 1841 rendered miraculous help to those who served a panikhida for him at his coffin. Even during his lifetime the Archbishop was venerated for his severe asceticism, especially for the ascetic feat of abstaining from sleep. He was known to spend nights on end standing motionless, with lifted arms, deep in prayer. He foreknew the day and the hour of his own death. The young Maximovitch was known to have a veneration for this holy hierarch.

Today Archbishop John may be seen to resemble the holy man of Kharkov in at least three respects: he was known not to have slept in a bed for forty years; he knew beforehand of his death; and he now rests under a cathedral in a special grave-chapel where panikhidas are sung almost daily and the psalter is read over his coffin by those who ask for his help. This is a unique case of the transplanting, as it were, of a part of Holy Russia to contemporary America.

While at Kharkov University, Vladika spent more time reading the Lives of the Saints than attending classes; nonetheless he was an excellent student. Evidently his emulation of saints was apparent even at that age, since Archbishop Anthony of Kharkov, one of the great Church figures of that time (later Metropolitan, first candidate to the Patriarchal See of Moscow, and first Chief Hierarchy of the Russian Church Abroad) took special pains to become acquainted with him, and then kept the youth close to him and guided his spiritual formation.

In 1921, during the Russian Civil War, Vladika, together with his parents, his brothers, and his sister, was evacuated to Belgrade, where he and his brothers entered the University of Belgrade. One brother graduated in the technical faculty and became an engineer, the other graduated in law and served in the Yugoslav police. Vladika himself graduated in 1925 in the faculty of theology. While he was a student he worked for his living by selling newspapers.

In 1924 Vladika was ordained reader in the Russian church in Belgrade by Metropolitan Anthony, who continued to exert great influence over him; and Vladika in his turn showed the utmost respect and devotion to his superior. In 1926 Metropolitan Anthony tonsured him a monk and ordained him hierodeacon in the Milkov Monastery, giving him the name John, after Vladika's own distant relative, Saint John Maximovitch of Tobolsk. On November 21 of the same year Vladika was ordained hieromonk by Bishop Gabriel of Chel-yabinsk.

From 1925 to 1927, Vladika was an instructor of religion at the Serbian State High School, and from 1929 to 1934 he was a teacher and tutor at the Serbian Seminary of St. John the Theologian at Bitol. There he served the Divine Liturgy in Greek for the local Greek and Macedonian communities, who had the greatest esteem for him.

The city of Bitol was in the diocese of Okhrida, and at that time the ruling bishop of this diocese was Nicholas Velimirovitch—a Serbian Chrysostom, a noted preacher, poet, writer, and organizer and inspirer of the popular religious movement. He, as much as Metropolitan Anthony, valued and loved the young Hieromonk John, and himself exerted a beneficial influence upon him. More than once he was heard to say, "If you wish to see a living saint, go to Bitol to Father John."

For, indeed, it began to become evident that this was an entirely extraordinary man. It was his own students who first discovered

what was perhaps Vladika's greatest feat of asceticism. They noticed at first that he stayed up long after everyone else had gone to bed; he would go through the dormitories at night and pick up blankets that had fallen down and cover the unsuspecting sleepers, making the Sign of the Cross over them. Finally it was discovered that he scarcely slept at all, and never in a bed, allowing himself only an hour or two each night of uncomfortable rest in a sitting position, or bent over on the floor praying before icons. Years afterward he himself admitted that since taking the monastic vows he had not slept lying in a bed. Such an ascetic practice is a very rare one; and yet it is not unknown to Orthodox tradition. The great 4th-century founder of coenobitic monasticism, St. Pachomius the Great, when receiving the Rule of monastic communal life from an angel, heard the following concerning sleep: "And they (the monks) shall not take their sleep lying down, but thou shalt make them seats so that when they are sitting down they shall be able to support their heads" (Rule 4).

Archbishop Averky of the Jordanville Holy Trinity Monastery, then a young hieromonk in Carpatho-Russia, was a witness of the deep impression Hieromonk John made upon the seminary students. When they returned home on vacations they would speak of their extraordinary instructor who prayed constantly, served the Divine Liturgy or at least received Holy Communion every day, fasted strictly, never slept lying down, and with true fatherly love inspired them with the

high ideals of Christianity and of Holy Russia (*Orthodox Russia*, 1966, no. 14).

In 1934 it was decided to raise Hieromonk John to the rank of bishop. As for Vladika himself, nothing was farther from his mind. A lady who knew him relates how she met him at this time on a streetcar in Belgrade. He told her that he was in town by mistake, having been sent for in place of some other Hieromonk John who was to be consecrated bishop! When she saw him the next day he informed her that the situation was worse than he had thought: it was *him* they wished to make bishop! When he had protested that this was out of the question, since he had a speech defect and could not enunciate clearly, he had only been told that the Prophet Moses had had the same difficulty.

The consecration occurred on May 28, 1934. Vladika was the last bishop of the very many to be consecrated by Metropolitan Anthony, and the extraordinarily high esteem in which that venerable hierarch held the new bishop is indicated in a letter which he sent to Archbishop Dimitry in the Far East. Himself declining an invitation to retire to China, he wrote: "...But in place of myself, as my soul, as my heart, I am sending you Vladika Bishop John. This little, frail man, looking almost like a child, is in actuality a miracle of ascetic firmness and strictness in our time of total spiritual enfeeblement" (*Orthodox Russia*, 1966, no. 13).

Vladika was assigned to the diocese of Shanghai.

II

Vladika arrived in Shanghai in late November, on the Feast of the Entrance of the Mother of God into the Temple, and found a large cathedral uncompleted and a jurisdictional conflict to resolve. The first thing he did was to restore Church unity. He established contact with Serbs, Greeks, Ukrainians. He paid special attention to religious education and made it a rule to be present at the oral examinations of the catechism classes in all the Orthodox schools in Shanghai. He at once became a protector of various charitable and philanthropic societies and actively participated in their work, especially after seeing the needy circumstances in which the majority of his flock, refugees from the Soviet Union, were placed. He never went visiting for tea to the rich, but he was to be seen wherever there was need, regardless of times and weather. He organized a home for orphans and the children of needy parents, entrusting it to the heavenly protection of a Saint he highly venerated, St. Tikhon of Zadonsk, who loved children. Vladika himself gathered sick and starving children off the streets and dark alleys of Shanghai's slums. Beginning with eight children, the orphanage later housed up to a hundred children at one time, and some 3500 in all. When the Communists came, Vladika evacuated the whole orphanage, first to an island in the Philippines, and then to America.

It soon became apparent to his new flock that Vladika was a great ascetic. The

core of his asceticism was prayer and fasting. He ate once a day at 11 p.m. During the first and last weeks of Great Lent he did not eat at all, and for the rest of this and the Christmas Lent he ate only bread from the altar. His nights he spent usually in prayer, and when he finally became exhausted he would put his head on the floor and steal a few hours of sleep near dawn. When the time would come to serve Matins, someone would knock on the door, to no avail; they would open the door and find Vladika huddled on the floor in the icon-corner, overcome by sleep. At a tap on the shoulder he would jump up, and in a few minutes he would be in church for services—cold water streaming down his beard, but quite awake.

Vladika officiated in the cathedral every morning and evening, even when sick. He celebrated the Divine Liturgy daily, as he was to do for the rest of his life, and if for some reason he could not serve, he would still receive Holy Communion. No matter where he was, he would not miss a service. Once, according to a witness, "Vladika's leg was terribly swollen and the concilium of doctors, fearing gangrene, prescribed immediate hospitalization, which Vladika categorically refused. Then the Russian doctors informed the Parish Council that they released themselves of any responsibility for the health and even the life of the patient. The members of the Parish Council, after long pleas for mercy and threats of taking him by force, compelled Vladika to agree, and he was sent to the Russian Hospital in the morning of the

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day before the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. By six o'clock, however, Vladika came limping to the cathedral on foot and served. In a day all the swelling was gone."*

Vladika's constant attention to self-mortification had its root in the *fear of God*, which he possessed in the tradition of the ancient Church and of Holy Russia. The following incident, told by O. Skopichenko and confirmed by many from Shanghai, well illustrates his daring, unshakeable faith in Christ. "A Mrs. Menshikova was bitten by a mad dog. The injections against rabies she either refused to take or took carelessly.... And then she came down with this terrible disease. Bishop John found out about it and came to the dying woman. He gave her Holy Communion, but just then she began having one of the fits of this disease; she began to foam at the mouth, and at the same time she spit out the Holy Gifts which she had just received. The Holy Sacrament cannot be thrown out. And Vladika picked up and put in his mouth the Holy Gifts vomited by the sick woman. Those who were with him exclaimed: 'Vladika, what are you doing! Rabies is terribly contagious!' But Vladika peacefully answered: 'Nothing will happen; these are the Holy Gifts.' And indeed nothing did happen."

Vladika wore clothing of the cheapest Chinese fabric, and soft slippers or sandals, always without socks no matter what the wea-

* G. Larin, in Archimandrite Veniamin's *Recollections of Archbishop John*, Strathfield, Australia, 1966, p. 10.

ther. He often went barefoot, sometimes after having given his sandals away to some poor man. He even served barefoot, for which he was severely criticized.

By now it had become known that Vladika not only was a righteous man and an ascetic, but was also so close to God that he was endowed with the gift of clairvoyance and there were healings by his prayers. A striking account told by an eyewitness, Lidia Liu, testifies to Vladika's spiritual height. "Vladika came to Hong Kong twice. It's strange, but I, not knowing Vladika then, wrote him a letter asking him to help a widow with children, and I also asked him about some personal spiritual matter, but I never received an answer. A year passed. Vladika came to Hong Kong and I was in a crowd that went to meet him in church. Vladika turned to me and said, 'It is you who wrote me the letter!' I was astonished, since Vladika had never seen me before.

"A moleben was sung, after which Vladika, standing before a lectern, was delivering a sermon. I was standing next to my mother, and we both saw a light surrounding Vladika down to the lectern—a radiance around him a foot wide. This lasted a rather long time. When the sermon was over, I, struck by such an unusual phenomenon, told what we had seen to R.V.S., who told us: 'Yes, many faithful saw it.' My husband, who was standing a little way off, also saw this light."

Vladika loved to visit the sick and did it every single day, hearing confessions and

giving Holy Communion. If the condition of a patient should become critical, Vladika would go to him at any hour of the day or night to pray at his bedside. Here is one undoubted miracle among the many worked by Vladika's prayers; it was recorded and placed in the archives of the County Hospital in Shanghai (source: N. Makovaya).

"L.D. Sadkovskaya was very much taken by the sport of horse racing. Once she was thrown off her horse; she hit her head on a rock and lost consciousness. She was brought to the hospital unconscious. A concilium of doctors agreed that her condition was hopeless and it was not likely that she would live until morning. The pulse was almost gone; the skull was fractured in places so that small pieces of the skull were pressing on the brain. In such a condition she would die on the operating table. Even if her heart would tolerate surgery and the result were successful, she would still remain deaf, dumb, and blind.

"Her sister, after hearing all this, rushed to Bishop John in despair and begged him to save her sister. Vladika agreed: he came to the hospital and asked everyone to leave the room and prayed there for about two hours. Then he called the chief doctor and asked him to examine her again. How surprised the doctor was to discover that her pulse was normal! He agreed to perform the operation immediately, but only in the presence of Bishop John. The operation was successful, and the doctors were amazed when, after the operation, the patient regained con-

sciousness and asked to drink. She can see and hear perfectly. She is still living and can talk, see, and hear. I have known her for thirty years."

Vladika visited the prison also, and celebrated the Divine Liturgy for the convicts on a primitive little table. But the most difficult task for a pastor is to visit the mentally ill and the possessed—and Vladika sharply distinguished between the two. Outside Shanghai there was a mental hospital, and Vladika alone had the spiritual power to visit these terribly sick people. He gave them Holy Communion, and they, surprisingly, received it peacefully and listened to him. They always looked forward to his visits and met him with joy.

Vladika possessed great courage. During the Japanese occupation the Japanese authorities tried in every way possible to bend the Russian colony to their will. Pressure was directed through the heads of the Russian Emigrant Committee. Two presidents of this Committee strove to maintain its independence, and as a result both were killed. Confusion and terror seized the Russian colony, and at that moment Vladika John, in spite of warnings from the Russians who were collaborating with the Japanese, declared himself the temporary head of the Russian colony.

During the Japanese occupation it was extremely dangerous to walk on the streets at night, and most people took care to be home by dark. Vladika, however, paying no heed to the danger, continued to visit the sick and needy at any hour of the night, and he was never touched.

At the end of the war persuasion and pressure were brought to bear on Russian clergy everywhere to submit to the newly-elected "Patriarch" of the Soviet Church. Of the six hierarchs in the Far East, five submitted; only Bishop John, resisting all persuasions and threats, remained loyal to the Russian Church Abroad. In 1946 he was raised to the rank of Archbishop over all the Russian faithful in China.

With the coming of the Communists, the Russians in China were forced once again to flee, most of them through the Philippine Islands. In 1949 approximately 5000 Refugees from the Chinese mainland were living in an International refugee Organization camp on the island of Tubabao in the Philippines. This island is located in the path of the seasonal typhoons which sweep through that part of the Pacific. During the 27-month period of the camp's occupancy, the island was threatened only once by a typhoon, and it changed course and bypassed the island.

When the fear of typhoons was mentioned by one Russian to the Filipinos, they replied that there was no reason to worry, because "your holy man blesses your camp from four directions every night." They referred to Vladika John; for no typhoon struck the island while he was there. After the camp had been almost totally evacuated and the people resettled elsewhere (mainly in the U.S.A. and Australia), and only about 200 persons were left on the island, it was struck by a terrible typhoon that totally destroyed the camp.

Vladika himself went to Washington, D.C., to get his people to America. Legislation was changed and almost the whole camp came to the New World—thanks again to Vladika.

III

The exodus of his flock from China accomplished, Archbishop John was given in 1951 a new field for his pastoral endeavor: he was sent by the Synod of Bishops to the Archdiocese of Western Europe, with his see first in Paris, and later in Brussels. He was now one of the leading hierarchs of the Russian Church, and his attendance was frequently required at the sessions of the Synod in New York City.

In Western Europe Vladika took a deep interest not only in the Russians in diaspora, for whom he exerted himself tirelessly in labors similar to those for which he had been known in Shanghai, but also in the local inhabitants. He received under his jurisdiction local Dutch and French Orthodox Churches, protecting them and encouraging their Orthodox development. He celebrated the Divine Liturgy in Dutch and French, as before he had served in Greek and Chinese, and as later he was to serve in English.

Vladika's interest in and devotion to the Church's Saints, of whom his knowledge was already seemingly limitless, was extended now to Western European Saints dating from before the schism of the Latin Church, many of whom, venerated only locally, were included in no Orthodox calendar of Saints. He collected their Lives and images of them,

and later submitted a long list of them to the Synod.

In Western Europe as in China people learned to expect the unexpected of Vladika; for here he continued to base his life upon the law of God, thinking nothing of the inconvenience or surprise this might sometimes occasion in those who are governed chiefly by the standards of men. Once Vladika chanced to be in Marseilles, and he decided to serve a panikhida on the site of the cruel assassination of King Alexander of Serbia. None of his clergy, out of false shame, wished to serve with Vladika. Indeed, what a thing to do—to serve in the middle of the street! So Vladika went alone. The citizens of Marseilles were amazed to see a clergyman in unusual dress, with long hair and beard, walking with a suitcase and a broom in the middle of the street. News photographers caught sight of him and photographed him. Finally he stopped, swept with the broom a small portion of the pavement, opened his suitcase and began taking out its contents. On the swept spot he put a pontifical eagle-rug, lit the censer, and began to serve a panikhida.

Vladika's reputation for holiness, too, spread among the non-Orthodox as well as the Orthodox population. In one of the Catholic churches of Paris, a priest strove to inspire his young people with these words: "You demand proofs, you say that now there are neither miracles nor saints. Why should I give you theoretical proofs, when today there walks in the streets of Paris a Saint—*Saint Jean Nus Pieds* (Saint John the Barefoot)."

Many people testify to the miracles worked by the prayers of Archbishop John in Western Europe.

IV

In San Francisco, whose cathedral parish is the largest in the Russian Church Abroad, a life-long friend of Vladika, Archbishop Tikhon, retired because of ill-health, and in his absence the construction of a great new cathedral came to a halt as a bitter dispute paralyzed the Russian community. In response to the urgent request of thousands of Russians in San Francisco who had known him in Shanghai, Archbishop John was sent by the Synod in 1962 as the only hierarch likely to restore peace in the divided community. He arrived at his last assignment as bishop twenty-eight years to the day after his first arrival in Shanghai: on the feast of the Entrance of the Mother of God into the Temple, November 21 (December 4), 1962.

Under Vladika's guidance a measure of peace was restored, the paralysis of the community was ended, and the cathedral finished. Yet even in the role of peacemaker Vladika was attacked, and accusations and slanders were heaped upon his head. He was forced to appear in public court—in flagrant violation of church canons—to answer to preposterous charges of concealing financial dishonesty by the Parish Council. All involved were completely exonerated; but thus Vladika's last years were filled with the bitterness of slander and persecution, to which he unflinchingly replied without complaint, without

judging anyone, with undisturbed peacefulness.

Vladika remained true to the end to his path of faithful service to the Church. To those who knew him in his last years perhaps two aspects of his character stood out. First was his strictness in what regarded the Church and the law of God. He insisted on the proper deportment of Church servers, allowing no levity, or even talking, in the altar. Himself an expert in Divine services, he would correct errors and omissions in the order of service immediately. With the congregation, too, he was strict, allowing no women to kiss the cross or icons while wearing lipstick, and requiring that the antidoron distributed at the end of the Liturgy be received fasting. He spoke against the desecration of the eves of Sundays and feast days by the organization of balls and other entertainments on them. He staunchly defended the Church (Julian) Calendar against new-calendar innovators. He forbade his clergy to participate in "Pan-Orthodox" services because of the dubious canonicity of some participants; and the activities of Orthodox "ecumenists" caused him to shake his head in disbelief. He was strictest of all with regard to the holy doctrine of Orthodoxy; while he was still a young bishop in Shanghai his critical essay on the "Sophiology" of Archpriest S.N. Bulgakov was instrumental in the Synod's condemnation of the latter's heresy in 1936. No one who has seen will soon forget Vladika's fierce look while lowering the pontifical candlesticks at the proclamation of the *Anath-*

emas against heretics on the Sunday of Orthodoxy—here he was one with the Church in excluding from her bosom all who reject the full and saving Orthodox faith. All this was not from any narrow-minded literalness or "fanaticism," but from the same fear of God which Vladika preserved his whole life long, and which prohibits one from trespassing against God's law at the peril of one's salvation.

A recent example of Vladika's righteous severity invites comparison with an incident from the life of Vladika's beloved St. Tikhon of Zadonsk, who rode into the midst of a pagan celebration held during the Apostles' Fast and delivered a heated accusing sermon against the participants (see *The Orthodox Word*, vol. 2, no. 3, p. 87). On the evening before October 19 (Nov. 2), 1964, the Russian Church Abroad celebrated the solemn canonization of Father John of Kronstadt, whom Vladika greatly venerated, taking an active part in the compiling of the service and akathist to him. The Latins celebrate on this day the feast of All Saints, and there is a tradition that during the preceding night the dark spirits celebrated their own festival of disorder. In America this "Halloween" has become an occasion on which children make mischief dressed in costumes of witches, devils, ghosts, as if calling on the dark powers—a diabolic mockery of Christianity.

A group of Russians organized on this night (which was also the eve of Sunday) a Halloween Ball. In the San Francisco Cathedral at the time of the first All-night Vigil

celebrated to St. John of Kronstadt, a number of people were absent, to the great sorrow of Vladika. After the service Vladika went to the place where the ball was still in progress. He climbed the steps and entered the hall, to the absolute astonishment of the participants. The music stopped and Vladika, in complete silence, glared at the dumbfounded people, slowly and deliberately making the round of the entire hall, staff in hand. He spoke not a word, and none was necessary; the mere sight of Vladika stung the conscience of all, as was evident from the general consternation. Vladika left in silence; and the next day in church he thundered his holy indignation and his flaming zeal calling all to the devout Christian life.

Yet Vladika is not best remembered by his flock for his sternness, but rather for his gentleness, his joyfulness, even for what is known as "foolishness for Christ's sake." The most popular photograph of him captures something of this aspect of his character. It was especially noticeable in his conduct with children. After services he would smile and joke with the boys who served with him, playfully knocking the refractory on the head with his staff. Occasionally the Cathedral clergy would be disconcerted to see Vladika, In the middle of a service (though never in the altar), bend over to play with a small child! And on feast days when blessing with holy water was called for, he would sprinkle the faithful, not on the top of the head as is usual, but right in the face (which once led a small girl to exclaim, "he squirts you"),

with a noticeable glint in his eye and total unconcern at the discomfiture of some of the more dignified. Children were absolutely devoted to him, despite his usual strictness with them.

Vladika was sometimes criticized for upsetting the usual order of things. He was often late for services (never on his own account, but because he had been visiting the sick or dying), and he would not allow them to begin without him; and when he celebrated the services would be quite long, as he allowed few of the standard abbreviations. He would appear at various places unannounced and at unexpected times; often he would visit hospitals late at night—and always be admitted. At times his judgments would seem to clash with common sense, and his actions would seem strange; and often he would not explain them.

No man is perfect; Vladika was sometimes wrong (and he did not hesitate to admit it when he found out). But usually he was right, and the seeming strangeness of some of his actions and judgments could later be seen to fit into a different pattern of things. Vladika's life was governed by the standards of the spiritual life, and if this upset the routine order of things it was in order to jolt people out of their spiritual inertia and remind them that there is a higher judgment than the world's.

A remarkable incident from Vladika's years in San Francisco (1963) illustrates several aspects of his holiness: his spiritual boldness based on absolute faith; his ability

to see the future and to overcome by his spiritual sight the bounds of space; and the power of his prayer, which beyond all doubt worked miracles. The incident is related by the woman who witnessed it, Mrs. L. Liu. The exact words of Vladika were confirmed by the Mr. T. who is mentioned.

"In San Francisco my husband was involved in an automobile accident and was seriously injured; he lost control of balance and suffered terribly. At this time Vladika had many troubles. Knowing the power of Vladika's prayers, I thought: if I ask Vladika to come to my husband, my husband would recover; but I was afraid to do this because Vladika was so busy then. Two days passed and suddenly Vladika came to us, accompanied by Mr. B.T., who had driven him. Vladika stayed with us about five minutes, but I believed that my husband would recover. The state of his health was at its most serious point then, and after Vladika's visit there was a sharp crisis and then he began to recover and lived four more years after this. He was quite aged. Afterwards I met Mr. T. at a Church meeting and he told me that he had been driving Vladika to the airport. Suddenly Vladika had said to him: 'Let's go now to the Liu's. He had objected that they would be late for the plane and that he could not turn around at that moment. Then Vladika had said: 'Can you take the life of a man upon yourself?' He could do nothing but drive Vladika to us. Vladika, as it turned out, was not late for the plane, because they had held it up for him."

With the announcement by Metropolitan Anastassy in 1964 of his retirement, Archbishop John became a leading candidate to succeed him as Metropolitan and Chief Hierarchy of the Russian Church Abroad. On the second ballot he was one of the two candidates, with the difference of a single vote between them. To resolve the equal division of the bishops, that night Vladika asked the youngest of the hierarchs, Bishop Philaret, to his quarters, and there he persuaded this unexpected candidate to accept the awesome responsibility of this office. The next day he withdrew his own candidacy and recommended the election of Bishop Philaret, whom the bishops elected unanimously, seeing in this sudden turn of events the grace of the Holy Spirit.

To such eminence among the hierarchs of the Russian Church was Vladika raised before the end of his earthly life. It was an eminence based not on any external qualities, for Vladika was frail, bent, without ambition or guile, unable even to speak clearly. It was an eminence based solely on those inner, spiritual qualities which made of him unquestionably one of the great Orthodox hierarchs of this century, and a holy man. In him, righteousness shone.

V

Among those who knew and loved Vladika, the first response to the news of his sudden death was: it cannot be! And this was more than a reaction to the suddenness of the event; for among those who were close to him there had unaccountably developed the notion

that this pillar of the Church, this holy man who was always accessible to his flock—would never cease to be! There would never be a time when one would not be able to turn to him for advice and consolation! In one sense, in a spiritual sense, this has since turned out to be true. But it is also one of the realities of this world that every man who lives must die.

Vladika was prepared for this reality. While others expected of him many more years of fruitful service to the Church of Christ—for he was a relatively young hierarch—he was readying himself for an end which he had foreseen at least for some months, and the very day of which he apparently knew in advance.

To the manager of the orphanage where he lived, who had spoken in the spring of 1966 of a diocesan meeting to be held three years later, he indicated, "I will not be here then." In May, 1966, a woman who had known Vladika for twelve years—and whose testimony, according to Metropolitan Philaret, is "worthy of complete confidence"—was amazed to hear him say, "I will die soon, at the end of June...not in San Francisco, but in Seattle...." Metropolitan Philaret himself testifies of Vladika's extraordinary final farewell to him when returning to San Francisco from the last session of the Synod which he attended in New York. After the Metropolitan had served the customary moleben before traveling, Vladika, instead of sprinkling his own head with holy water, as is always done by hierarchs, bent low and asked the Metropolitan to sprin-

kle him; and after this, instead of the usual mutual kissing of hands, Vladika firmly took the Metropolitan's hand and kissed it, withdrawing his own (see *Orthodox Russia*, 1966, no. 18.)

Again, on the evening before his departure for Seattle, four days before his death, Vladika astonished a man for whom he had just served a moleben with the words, "You will not kiss my hand again." And on the day of his death, at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy which he celebrated, he spent three hours in the altar praying, emerging not long before his death, which occurred at 3:50 p.m. on July 2 (June 19, OS), 1966. He died in his room in the parish building next to the church, without preparatory signs of any illness or affliction. He was heard to fall and, having been placed in a chair by those who ran to help him, breathed his last peacefully and with little evident pain, in the presence of the miracle-working Kursk Icon of the Sign. Thus was Vladika found worthy to imitate the blessed death of his patron, St. John of Tobolsk.

Today Archbishop John reposes in a chapel in the basement of the San Francisco cathedral; and there a new chapter has begun in the story of this holy man. Just as St. Seraphim of Sarov told his spiritual children to regard him as living after his death, and to come to his grave and tell him what was in their hearts, so our Vladika also has proved to be hearing those who revere his memory. Soon after his death a one-time student of his, Fr. Amvrossy P., saw one

night a dream (or a vision, he could not tell which): Vladika, clad in Easter vestments, full of light and shining, was censing the cathedral and joyfully uttered to him just one word while blessing him: "happy."

Later, before the end of the forty-day period, Fr. Constantine Z., long Vladika's deacon and now a priest, who had lately been angry at Vladika and had begun to doubt his righteousness, saw Vladika in a dream all in light, with rays of light shining around his head so brightly that it was impossible to look at them. Thus were Fr. Constantine's doubts of Vladika's holiness dispelled.

Many others have seen Archbishop John in unusual dreams that have a particular significance or message. Some affirm that supernatural help has been granted them. The modest grave-chapel, soon to be adorned with icons by Pimen Sofronov in remembrance of Vladika, is the witness already of how many tears, confessions, heartfelt requests....

The manager of the St. Tikhon Zadonsky Home and long a devoted servant of Vladika, M. A. Shakmatova, saw a remarkable dream. A crowd of people carried Vladika in a coffin into St. Tikhon's Church; Vladika came to life and stood in the royal doors anointing the people and saying to her, "Tell the people: although I have died, I am alive!"

It is yet too early to be able even to grasp the fact that we, cold and sinful, living in this evil age, have been witnesses of such a glorious phenomenon—the life and death of a saint! It is as if the times of Holy Russia have returned to earth, as if to prove the

fact that *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever* (Heb. 13:8). Amen.

Eugene Rose
1966

Chapter 3

Childhood

1896-1911

The birthplace of Archbishop John was the warm, blossoming land of the Kharkov region in southern Russia. Here, in the estate of Adamovka, in the illustrious noble family of Maximovitch, on June 4, 1896, a son was born to the parents Boris and Glafira. In holy Baptism he was named Michael, in honor of the holy Archangel of God. From of old the Maximovitch family had been famous throughout Russia for its piety and patriotism. The most illustrious member of this family was a Saint glorified by the Church, the holy Hierarch John, Metropolitan of Tobolsk, a well-known spiritual writer and poet, translator of the *Heliotropion*, or *Coordination of the Human Will with the Divine Will*, missionary to Siberia who sent the first Orthodox Mission to China, and who, especially after his repose, poured forth a multitude of miracles for the faithful. He was canonized in 1916, and his incorrupt relics are preserved even to this day in Tobolsk. Although the

holy Hierarch John died at the beginning of the 18th century, yet his spirit rested on his distant nephew, who was to receive his name in monasticism, and the young Michael (or Misha, as he was called for short) from earliest childhood was a remarkable boy.

Misha's grandfather on his father's side was a prominent landowner of the area, and his grandfather on his mother's side was a doctor in Kharkov. His father held a position of leadership among the nobility, and his uncle (his father's brother), who edited the *Heliotropion* of St. John of Tobolsk, was Rector of the University of Kiev; a similar worldly career seemed to be in store for the boy Michael also. His relationship to his parents was always excellent, and he took their opinions into serious consideration as long as they lived. They died in Venezuela, his mother in 1952, and his father in 1954.

As a boy Misha Maximovitch was sickly and ate little. He was very quiet and gentle. He strove to be on good terms with everyone, but he had no especially close friends. He loved animals, and dogs in particular. He did not like noisy children's games and was often in a very pensive frame of mind.

The outstanding characteristic of his childhood was his deep religiousness, which he manifested in ways far beyond his years. In his sermon on being consecrated Bishop in 1934, he himself said: "From the first days when I began to become aware of myself, I wished to serve righteousness and truth. My parents kindled in me a striving to stand unwaveringly for the truth, and my soul was

captivated by the example of those who had given their lives for it."

Young Misha loved to "play monastery," dressing toy soldiers as monks and making toy forts into monasteries. As he grew older, his religious fervor deepened. He collected icons and religious and historical books, amassing a large library, and he loved above all to read the Lives of Saints. At night he would stand for a long time at prayer. Being the oldest child, he had a great influence on his four brothers and one sister, who knew the Lives of Saints and the facts of Russian history through him. He was very demanding of himself and others in keeping the Church's laws and national customs. From his earliest years he was a fervent Russian patriot, and he instilled in others also a reverence for Russia and its history. His love extended likewise to all the Slavic and Orthodox peoples, and in 1912, when the Serbs were betrayed by the Bulgarians, in righteous indignation he removed the pictures of the Bulgarian king from the younger children's scrapbooks and sealed up the family's phonograph record of the Bulgarian national anthem so that it could not be played.

Misha's holy and righteous childhood greatly impressed his French Catholic governess, and it was under his influence that she was baptized Orthodox when the boy was fifteen years old. He helped to prepare her for baptism and taught her how to pray. He took an active part in church life, and every year he would participate in the procession of the Wonderworking Ozeryansk Icon of the Most

Holy Mother of God from Kharkov to the Ozeriansk Monastery.

The Maximovitch country estate in Bare Valley was located only eight miles from the famous Sviatogorsk Monastery. The family spent every summer at their estate, and young Misha would sleep outdoors in a tent. The family had great reverence for the Monastery and spent much time there. It can be imagined what awe and fervor was inspired in Misha's eager heart when he came as a pilgrim to this remarkable Monastery, which was situated on a forested bank of the Northern Donets. It had an Athonite Typicon, majestic churches, a high "Mount Tabor," many caves, schema-monks, sketes, and a large brotherhood of 600 monks—enough to inflame the zeal of any young lover of the Lives of Saints. Misha, a "monk from childhood," was immensely impressed, and he would often come to the monastery by himself.

When he was eleven years old, Misha was sent to the Poltava Cadet Corps (Military Academy), which his father had attended. Here he continued to be quiet and religious and not at all like a soldier. He did well in all subjects and liked them all, with the exception of physical education, from which he was excused in his last years.

During these years away from home, which usually are so crucial for young impressionable souls, he could not avoid meeting the new Poltava Bishop, who struck the whole town with his severe asceticism. Bishop Theophan Bistrov was short in stature, very thin, "transparent" as people

used to describe him. He served with closed eyes in almost motionless stillness and evoked a deep feeling of spirituality. It seemed as though an icon of a Saint came down from the frescoed walls of the cathedral and walked amidst the faithful. He spoke very softly, always in a state of concentrated prayer, yet quite accessible, especially to the youth. It is interesting to note that there was a strong similarity in Blessed John's late years, as if Hierarch Theophan was his model of an ascetic prelate that had so deeply impressed him since childhood.

While he was attending the Cadet Corps, at the age of 13, Misha was guilty of a serious "breach of conduct" which is extremely revealing of his character as a boy. The Cadets would often march formally in the city of Poltava, and in 1909, on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the Russian victory in the Battle of Poltava, they were marching with special solemnity. As they passed by the front of the Poltava Cathedral, Cadet Michael turned toward the Cathedral—and made the sign of the Cross! The boys laughed, and later they mocked him for this; and he was disciplined by the authorities for it. Finally the Grand Prince Constantine Constantinovitch, patron of the corps, whose son was a fellow cadet of Misha's, issued the order that Cadet Michael Maximovitch was not to be punished for an act which, far from being reprehensible and deserving of censure, was most praiseworthy and revealed sound religious feelings. Misha, from an object of ridicule, became a hero.

In 1914 Michael graduated from the Cadet Corps and, following the deep desire of his heart, he wished then to attend the Kiev Theological Academy. His parents insisted, however, that he attend Law School in Kharkov, and out of obedience to them he put away his own desire and began to prepare for a career in Law.

It was during his university years that the Orthodox education and outlook which he had received in his childhood came to maturity in the youth Michael. At an age when some boys who are raised *unconsciously* Orthodox are "rebellious" or even discarding the "fairy tales" of their religious upbringing, young Michael understood the point of this upbringing; he saw that the Lives of Saints, in particular, contain a profound wisdom which is unsuspected by those who read them superficially, and that the proper knowledge of them is more important than any university course. And so it was, as his classmates noticed, that Michael spent more time reading the Lives of the Saints than attending academic lectures, although he did very well in his university studies also. He studied the Orthodox Saints precisely "on the university level": he assimilated their world-outlook and their orientation toward life, entered into their psychology, studied the variety of their activity and ascetic labors and practice of prayer. He came to love them with all his heart, was thoroughly penetrated by their spirit—and began to live like them. "While studying the worldly sciences," he said in the sermon mentioned above, "I went all the more deeply into the study of

the science of sciences, into the study of the spiritual life." He put all his efforts into this, and his spiritual eyes became fully open and his soul was wounded with the thirst to acquire the true meaning and path of life in Christ.

The boy Michael came to the age of a man and finished his university studies just as the fearful Revolution was beginning its course with the intent to subject the whole world to anti-Christainity. His whole family was intensely loyal to the Orthodox Tsar, and for it the very first days of the February Revolution in 1917 were days of mourning. Michael, now thoroughly penetrated with the principles of Orthodox life according to the example of God's Saints, was especially bold in continuing to live by the standard of Orthodox sanctity even in the midst of the new conditions of life. Thus, at a Church meeting in Kharkov there was talk of taking down a silver bell in the cathedral belfry and melting it. The vast majority, caught up in the revolutionary spirit or fearful of opposing it, were in favor of this sacrilege, and only Michael and a very few others dared to speak out boldly against this. As the revolutionary spirit spread and the arrests began, his boldness became very dangerous, and his family tried to persuade him to leave home and hide himself. He only replied that there is nowhere to hide from God's will; without God's will nothing happens, not one hair falls from our head. He was arrested, then released after a month. After a short time he was arrested again, but when it was seen

that he seemed not to care whether he was free or in prison, he was soon released again. Already he quite literally lived in another world, and he simply refused to conform to the "reality" that governs the lives of most men; he had resolved to follow unwaveringly the path of God's law.

Thus, the seed of true Orthodoxy planted in his childhood took deep root in the soil of the heart of this chosen one of God, and his knowledge and love of the different kinds of Saints prepared his soul to become as it were a wondrous new plant, with marvellous and varied fruits seldom to be seen together in one person. As his later life revealed, he was at one and the same time a stern ascetic, and a loving pastor; a feeder of orphans and unmercenary healer, and a missionary and apostle; a profound theologian, and a fool for Christ's sake; a true shepherd of his banished Russian flock and a hierarch of universal significance.*

Fr. Herman
1979

* The sources for this chapter are mostly from Archimandrite Spiridon (Efimov, +1984) as well as from the letters of his brother Constantine and sister Maria of Venezuela.

Chapter 4

Teacher at the Bitol Seminary, Yugoslavia 1929-1934

Reminiscences of a Seminarian

*Remember your instructors, who
have spoken unto you the word
of God, and considering their
end, follow their faith.*

(Heb. 13:7)

Almost five decades have flown by* since the appearance at Bitol Seminary of a very modest monk. This was young Hieromonk John Maximovitch, who was Russian by origin. His outward appearance was not striking, but nonetheless was a little special. He was a man of medium stature with thick black hair which covered his shoulders. His face was without a single wrinkle, with large eyes

* These memoirs were first published in 1975, in the Serbian Journal *Pravoslavie* (Sept. 1). English translation in *Orthodox Life*, July-August, 1986.

which appeared as if looking out from the hair. He had not yet grown much beard. His nose was straight, but his lower jaw, as if taught, was an impediment to his speech. His right leg was shorter than the other, and he wore a prosthetic shoe which tapped as he walked, especially when he walked along the corridor or in the classroom. Often he used a cane. This is the way he appeared among us in the school year of 1928.

No one realized with what fullness the Holy Spirit dwelt within him. Undoubtedly by God's providence, he was indispensable at that time to the Bitol Seminary, which in its boarding school had from 400 to 500 students. Many students on scholarships lived in the boarding school until the fourth year of school, until they were given the possibility to choose either to finish seminary or go to some other school, retaining their scholarships. As a result, there were many students from different schools, most of whom were seminarians. There were many Albanians, fewer Russians and Czechs. From morning until evening it buzzed like a beehive. Among these youths and boys began to work this holy man who, with struggle, prayer and warm Christian love, created new people.

Ascetic Struggler

With the appearance of a new teacher among students, the question always arises, "What will he be like? Will he be strict or kind, etc.?" Probably there were these questions in relation to Fr. John. But he, by his personal example, very quickly answered

that he was strictest with himself. How many were his daily labors at prayer and prostrations only God knows, but we could only partly see and feel. The bishop of Ochrid, Nicholai Velimirovich, often visited the seminary and spoke with the teachers and students. For us his meeting with Fr. John was unusual. After mutual prostrations there was an unusually cordial, loving conversation. Once, before parting, he turned to a small group of students (of whom I was one) with these words: "Children, listen to Fr. John; he is an angel of God in human form." We ourselves became convinced that this was the correct characterization of him. His life was angelic. One can rightly say that he belonged more to heaven than to earth. His meekness and humility were like that recorded in the lives of the greatest ascetics and desert-dwellers. He ate only that amount of food which was indispensable to sustaining his body. His clothing was simple, and a bed he did not need. His room was situated on the basement level; it had one window without curtains, which looked into the depths of the courtyard. In his room was an ordinary table with a chair, and a bed on which he never lay. On his table always lay the Holy Gospel, and on a shelf stood the service books. That was all. At all times of the night he could be seen reading the Bible, because *his will is rather in the law of the Lord, and in His law will he meditate day and night* (Psalm 1:2).

The way in which he experienced all the church services and prayers is impossible

to convey in words. His preparations for holy Liturgy were extraordinary. From Thursday onwards he took less food. On Friday and Saturday he hardly ate, until, on Sunday, he served Liturgy.

The first week of Great Lent he did not eat, but every second day he served, likewise also during Passion Week. When Great Saturday arrived, his body was completely exhausted. But on the day of Christ's Resurrection he was revived. After Divine Liturgy his strength returned. Angelic joy lit his face. In this way his ascetic life passed before our eyes.

A Man of Prayer with an Extraordinary Memory

Fr. John was a unique man of prayer. He was so absorbed in the meaning of the text of the prayers that the impression was created that he was talking with God, the Most Holy Theotokos, the angels and the saints. They were present to his spiritual eyes. It may be that for our benefit he spoke aloud to teach us how to pray. Every one of his prayers were vibrant; he spoke from memory with special expression. It is not known how many prayers he knew by heart. For him this was no miracle because he had a great gift from God, an unusual memory. This was discovered by all of us students as well as by all the teachers. Events from the Holy Gospel he knew as though he saw them before his own eyes, and he knew the chapter where they were to be found; when

necessary, he could even quote the verse. He knew the character and peculiarities of every student so that he could immediately tell when and how each student answered, what he knew and didn't know. All this he did without any notes. After many verifications no one could doubt his exceptional memory.

Mutual Love

Fr. John loved us all and we him. In our eyes he was the embodiment of all Christian virtues: quiet, calm, gentle. He glowed before our eyes. We saw in him no deficiency, even in the way he spoke; we quickly grew accustomed to that. He became for us so close that we considered him an older brother, loved and esteemed. There was no conflict, personal or public, which he could not resolve. There was no question without an answer. It was sufficient that someone pose a question on the street and he would immediately answer. If the question was rather important, he would answer it before a large gathering, after service in church, in class, or in the cafeteria. The answer was always concentrated, clear, full and knowledgeable, because he was a highly-learned man, having acquired two university degrees, Theology and Law. He daily and nightly prayed for us. Every night, like a guardian angel, he watched over us. For one he adjusted a pillow; for another, a blanket. Always, upon entering or leaving the room, he blessed us with the sign of the Cross.

Teacher

Finally, let us see what sort of teacher he was. He taught by a plan, a special method. He was at once a theorist and a practitioner. He combined practice and theory skillfully; because of this his subjects were retained without excessive reading. Let's recall, for instance, liturgics with church rules. He had a schedule by which students read in the kliros. One group of four students and another (altogether eight students), had to appear at the appointed time in Fr. John's room where all the service books were to be found. The first four students had to find everything that should be read or sung on that day or feast-day. The next four students listened. At this time the theory and symbolism of action, etc., was explained. In this way they practiced the entire year. In class the theory was emphasized. He demanded constant vigilance everywhere, especially during services. He wanted to attract students so that they would especially pay attention to the Holy Gospel as the source of all theological knowledge. Because of this, at the beginning of the lesson he asked what had been read that day from the Holy Gospel and Epistle. Everyone had to know because no one knew whom he would ask. After this he would give short explanations. What splendid explanations he gave when dealing with the subject of pastoral theology and the history of the

Christian Church! Some lectures on pastoral theology he wrote in special notebooks for us. In all of them he expressed himself best. By his convictions the priest is shown by the Apostle Paul as an ideal pastor who must be *an example for the faithful in word, in life, in spirit, in faith, in purity* (I Tim. 4:12).

A priest is the spiritual father of his parish; he must act in this way: his parish is a large family which cannot exist without pastoral love and daily prayer. Wherever possible he must come to help in order to partake of their joy and their sorrow. These are Fr. John's main thoughts which he explained in all his teachings.

Lessons on the history of the Christian Church likewise were well imprinted, because Fr. John knew how to select the most important points, often repeating until everyone remembered. When, in the year 1931, we were taking examinations for a certificate of graduation, Professor Dimitry Stefanovich, in the position of representative of the ministry, was amazed by the excellent answers of the students. I think more than half the students answered excellently, and the rest were very good. There were no poor grades. The teachers explained to the representative of the ministry that Fr. John was inseparable from his students, and during the whole year explained everything to the last detail.

And so Fr. John, by his exceptional personality, delved into the soul of each student. He was among us like one sent by God, delegated to work in His wide cornfield. He

honestly performed this, his mission, in my generation.

These memoirs refer to the period of time between 1928 and 1931. He stayed in the seminary until his election as bishop of Shanghai; because of this, I consider my memoirs incomplete.

Archpriest Urosh Maximovitch

Chapter 5

Wonderworker of Shanghai

1934-1951

In 1934 Hieromonk John of the Milkovo Monastery in Yugoslavia was consecrated bishop and sent to head the flock of Russian exiles in Shanghai. Here he soon became known as a loving pastor who gave himself entirely to his flock, refusing help to no one, and as a holy man whose prayer worked miracles. Later, with the approach of the Communists, by his intercessions with several governments and by his unceasing prayers, he rescued almost his entire flock, leading it through the Philippines to America and freedom. To this day most Russians who knew him remember him as "Vladika John of Shanghai." The following are but a few of the many accounts that relate to this period of his life, and that demonstrate beyond any doubt the power of his prayer with God.

I

Once in Shanghai Vladika John was asked to the bed of a dying child, whose case had been called hopeless by the physi-

cians. Entering the apartment, Vladika John went straight to the room in which the sick boy lay, although no one had managed yet to show him where this was. Without examining the child, Vladika immediately 'fell down' in front of the icon in the corner, which was very characteristic of him, and prayed for a long time. Then, assuring the relatives that the child would recover, he quickly left. And in fact the child became better towards morning and he soon recovered, so that a physician was no longer needed. An eyewitness, Colonel N.N. Nikolaev, confirms this account in all details.

Dr. A.F. Baranov (Erie, Pennsylvania)

II

Archbishop John has departed into the Heavenly Church. Now praying for the repose of his righteous soul one is involuntarily reminded of the words of the Gospel, *A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good* (Luke 6: 45). Everyone who had the opportunity to have close contact with Hierarch John, will say with sincerity that the Hierarch always bore these words in his heart.

Once he told me, "Prayer is the foundation of the success of archpastoral activity. In the course of the day one must spend six hours conducting church services, six hours contemplating on God, six hours doing good deeds and six hours resting." He performed precisely that which would make him unusually firm, deeply humble and penetrating.

The Hierarch spent a lot of energy on children and young people. Thus he founded the orphanage of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk, frequented all Russian educational institutions, constantly visited all classes of Religious Instruction, and personally conducted all examinations on that subject in all schools. An especially difficult task was the upbringing of the orphan children of the St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Orphanage.

He always used to say that the hardest emotional difficulties the orphans have are before great holidays like Christmas Eve and before Pascha, when the orphans see how Christian families prepare themselves for the feastsdays, how fathers and mothers take care of their children—and they see that they don't have that. He always strove to be to them both father and mother.

The kind Hierarch, while raising children in a strictly religious manner, would at the same time make Christmas tree parties, plays, and even acquired horns and wind instruments, resulting in a quite good brass orchestra. But of special joy for him was when the young people would gather for the Fellowship of St. Ioasaph of Belgorod, where lectures used to be conducted on religious and philosophic topics and Bible study.*

* The author of these memoirs was the first president of this society and was dearly loved by Blessed John.

Young men and women, the members of the St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Orphanage, used to love Archbishop John to such an extent that they never felt they were orphans. They knew that they had a strong protector, their spiritual father, who would not allow anyone to hurt them in this earthly life of man.

To depict in full the inward life of the ascetic of prayer and pastoral work of Archbishop John is difficult indeed. We can testify only in part. Remembering, however, his archpastoral deeds as an Orthodox man of prayer and an ascetic, we see in reality the power of the words of the holy Apostle James, *the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.*

Archimandrite Benjamin (Garshin)

Australia, 1966

III

Your Grace: We have read the booklet published in California concerning the life and activity of the ever-memorable Archbishop John (Maximovitch), formerly of Shanghai.* I am Maria Petrovna Prigorovskaya (now Radionova), a former teacher of the Commercial college in Shanghai, and I know two cases of serious illnesses which were healed by the prayers of Vladika John.

1. Unfortunately, I do not remember the year, month, or day when in the orphanage of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk, which was

* *Blessed John Maximovitch* (in Russian), St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, Platina, California, 1971.

founded by Vladika John, a six or seven year old girl suddenly became ill. Towards night she had a very high temperature and she cried out from pain. About midnight she was sent to the hospital of the Russian Orthodox Brotherhood. The doctor who was called D.I. Kazakov, now reposed, found in the girl a twisting of the intestines (volvulus). Other doctors, as well as the mother of the girl, were also called. After an examination and consultation the doctors announced to the mother that the condition of her daughter was hopeless, and even an operation might be fatal. The mother nonetheless asked them to save the girl and perform the operation, and she herself, being a religious woman, went immediately at night to Vladika John, who lived in a house near the Cathedral, not far from the hospital.

Vladika John, who did not lie down on a bed at night, immediately received her and listened to her fervent request to pray for and save her only daughter. Vladika summoned the mother to the Cathedral, opened the Royal Gates, and began to pray before the Altar Table, while the mother, standing on her knees in front of the iconostasis, likewise fervently prayed for her daughter. This continued for a long time, and it was already dawn when Vladika John, having finished praying, went up to the mother, blessed her and told her to go home, for her daughter would be alive and well.

The mother, encouraged, hastened, not home, but to the hospital. There she met Dr. D.I. Kazakov, who told her that the o-

operation had proceeded successfully and added that he had never seen such a case in his practice. He was a very religious man and added that only God could have helped through her fervent prayer. Then the mother said that she had just come from Vladika John, who had been praying together with her in the Cathedral. Within a few days the girl was released from the hospital. The whole of Shanghai knew about this miraculous recovery of health.

2. Likewise I do not remember the date. A former teacher of our Commercial College became ill. He was taken to the hospital of the Russian Orthodox Brotherhood, where the doctors diagnosed a dangerous appendicitis and told his wife that he could die any minute. Dr. Ogilvy declared that even an operation would not help, and he might die during the operation. His wife was in despair. She remembered Vladika John, who had saved the girl by his prayers, and she went to him. Vladika knew the sick man well. The wife told him about the condition of her sick husband and asked him to pray for him. Vladika, having listened to her, calmed her and said that he would go to the hospital right away, and he added that the life of a man is not in the hands of doctors, but in the hands of God; and he sent her home. (She was a teacher at the girls' high school in Shanghai.)

Vladika John went to the hospital. He went up to the bed of the sick man, placed his hands on the man's head, prayed for a long time, and then blessed him and left.

When the wife came to the hospital to see the sick man, Nurse Cornilova, on meeting her, told her that an extraordinary thing had happened. Towards morning, in going through the wards, she had come to her husband and seen that he was sitting up in bed. She raised the sheet in order to put him back in bed, and she saw that the sheet on which he was sitting was all covered with pus and blood. The appendix had burst outwards and drenched the sheet. This was an extraordinary thing. The doctors affirmed that there had never been such a case in their practice, and when they found out about Vladika's visit and his prayer over the sick man, they understood that a miracle had occurred by the prayers of our dear Vladika, who was always a man of prayer for us.

The sick man did not even remember that Vladika had been to see him and had prayed for him. After his release from the hospital, he and his wife had a moleben of thanksgiving served and they thanked Vladika for his prayers.

Maria P. Radionova

October 5, 1971

Australia

IV

In the Philippines, "being leader of the church region where the church was located, and where the priests, nuns, and Vladika lived, I sometimes accompanied Vladika to the city of Guyan, where in a Philippine hospital there were seriously ill Russians whom Vladika visited, handing out pocket-size Gospels

and small icons. On one such trip, on entering the Russian ward we heard terrible screams coming to us from afar. To Vladika's question as to the reason for these screams, the Russian nurse replied that they came from a hopelessly sick woman who, since she disturbed the patients with her screaming, had been placed in the former American military hospital which adjoined this building. Vladika immediately decided to go to the sick woman, but the Russian nurse advised him not to go, as a sickening smell came from her. 'That doesn't mean anything,' Vladika said, and with quick strides he went to the sick woman in the next building. I followed him. In fact, there was an unpleasant odor coming from the sick woman. Going up to her, Vladika put a cross on her head and began to pray. I went out. Vladika prayed for a long time and then confessed the sick woman and gave her Holy Communion. When we left, she was no longer screaming, but only groaning softly. Some time passed. On another such trip to the hospital, we had hardly entered the courtyard in a jeep, when a woman came running out of the hospital and threw herself at Vladika's feet. It was the 'hopelessly' sick woman for whom Vladika had prayed."

G. Larin
Sydney, Australia

V

In 1968 there came to our Brotherhood of Father Herman in San Francisco a woman who informed us that her name was Anna Petrovna Lushnikova, and hearing that we were collecting information about Vladika John, she insisted that we immediately, without any delay, write down the following. She related that she was by profession a singing teacher and that she had once helped Archbishop Dimitry in China very much by her advice on breathing properly while pronouncing words, when his physicians had been powerless to help him. When Vladika John came to the Far East his unclear diction was noticed immediately by everyone. It was said that he was a stutterer from birth, that he had been wounded in the mouth, etc. But she immediately guessed what was wrong and came to him and offered to help. According to her, Vladika's whole organism was in a state of exhaustion. From weakness his lower jaw was hanging down and prevented him from pronouncing words clearly. She showed him how to breathe properly, to articulate, and so forth. He began regularly to come to her for exercises, sitting humbly and pronouncing "ooo," "aaa," etc. Out of gratitude he paid her, always leaving an American 20-dollar bill. Vladika's speech improved, but whenever a fast would come the defect would again make itself known, and again he would come to her. She tried to help him as much as she could, and seeing in him a man of God, she came to have

a great love for him and became his spiritual daughter.

"In Shanghai in 1945," Anna Petrovna told us, "I was wounded during the war, and I was dying in the French hospital. I knew that I was dying and I begged people to tell Vladika, so that he would come and give me Holy Communion. It was about 10 or 11 at night, and there was a storm outside with wind and rain. I was in agony and was suffering terribly. At my cries to call Vladika the doctors and nurses came and said that it was out of the question, as it was wartime and the hospital was locked up for the night, and I would have to wait until morning. I didn't listen to anything, but only continued to shout: 'Vladika, come! Vladika, come!' and no one could tell him of my wish. Suddenly, in the midst of this storm, I saw in the open door of the ward that Vladika had appeared, all wet, and was coming toward me. Since his arrival was something in the nature of a miracle, I began to feel him to see if he were real, and I asked, 'or is it your spirit?' He smiled quietly and said, 'Real,' and gave me Holy Communion. Here I fell asleep and slept after this for 18 hours. In the same ward with me there was another patient. She also saw Vladika giving me Holy Communion. After I woke up from my 18 hour sleep, I felt well and said that this was because Vladika had come and given me Holy Communion. But no one believed me and they said that Vladika couldn't possibly have entered the locked hospital in such a night. I asked my neighbor in the ward, and she confirmed that Vladika

had been there, but all the same they didn't believe us. But the fact was apparent—I was alive and felt well. At this time the nurse who didn't believe me was making my bed and she discovered, as if to authenticate what I had said—that there was a 20-dollar bill under the pillow, left there by Vladika! He knew that I owed the hospital a great deal and that I was already in need before that, and so he put the bill there. Later he confirmed that he had put the bill there. From that time on I got better. Later, in 1961, after a terrible automobile accident he again gave me Holy Communion in the hospital and healed me."

With this Anna Petrovna finished her story and left, saying how she wished that she could have been buried by Vladika John when she died. And her wish, even after the death of Vladika himself, was in fact fulfilled. Some time passed after our meeting. Coming home after the All-night Vigil for the Transfiguration of the Lord, Anna Petrovna died at night from gas fumes in her apartment. On the same night of the Transfiguration Olga I. Semeniuk, who had been close to Vladika in Shanghai, saw in a dream that Anna Petrovna, dead, was lying in a highly-raised coffin in the new cathedral in San Francisco, and Vladika John in his mantle was going around her censing and serving her funeral, to triumphal choral singing. In the morning all found out about her sudden death. And then we understood why the Lord had given her the idea to come to us and urgently insist that we write down her testimony of the

clairvoyance and wonderworking of Vladika John, who already in that other transfigured world, on the day of the Transfiguration, celebrated her funeral.

Reader Gleb Podmoshensky
December, 1968

Chapter 6

Victim of Envy

The Sufferings Endured by Blessed John in Shanghai

I'm sending you sad news: last night in L.A. Olga Ivanovna Semeniuk died, who was very close to Archbishop John in Shanghai. Lately she lived with her son B. For me it is a great loss. Pray for her. She used to tell me her reminiscences of days gone by in Shanghai, such things about Archbishop John which I don't know if you knew: how some people attempted to poison him and almost succeeded, for he was almost gone. The doctors doubted if he would live more than two months and decided upon sending him off as a hopeless case to a resort in Tsandau.

Blessed John had the habit of having his meal only once a day, late at night. The dinner would be prepared and brought to him. Often he would be so busy in his study and so forgetful that it would get cold. Once Mrs. Olga Semeniuk, whose sons were the bishop's devoted acolytes and were often with him, noticed that the food was not touched

by him. She took the plate, warmed the food and reminded the bishop that it was time to eat. He did not touch it, as if he knew something. Then she repeated the warming several times until she began to notice that the food turned some strange unnatural color, so she threw it away and brought him whatever was left from their own dinner, which he immediately gladly ate. This incident she recalled after the actual poisoning. (The incident in this paragraph was personally told the editor by Olga Semeniuk in 1969.)

Bishop John did not want to go to Tsandau and said: "Let Olga Ivanovna henceforth prepare food for me," which she gladly accepted and always would bring it herself and even stand before him until he would finish. No one touched his food. In two months he got well.

But once after Paschal Liturgy he did not come out from the altar for a long time. When he did, he came out pale as a sheet and began to throw up. The president of the Cathedral Sisterhood quickly brought a dish and handed it to him. He threw up some strange rose-colored matter. It was from the wine bottle from which he rinsed his chalice after the service. A hole was dug in the garden and it was buried. He was poisoned by a certain priest, who later lived in L.A. during our time and wrote very nasty articles in Russian newspapers. Father Peter T. used to tell much about him. Finally when he was dying from cancer, Archbishop John went to him in the hospital to release him from his sins, and he repented of his sins before his

death. He was a former school teacher in Russia, I think perhaps possessed.

Archbishop John used to visit hospitals at night and the Semeniuk boys accompanied him. In all hospitals they knew him and would open doors to him. The sick ones used to call him without the use of telephone or telegraph. I wrote down some other recollections of Olga Semeniuk. She died in her sleep. What a fortunate one!

May God give rest to the faithful servant of God and to Blessed John!

Helen Kontzevitch
1984

Chapter 7

Apostle to the West

1951-1966

In 1951, Archbishop John was assigned as ruling hierarch of the Western European Archdiocese of the Russian Church Outside of Russia. Here his missionary fervor, firmly grounded on his life of constant prayer and purity of Orthodox doctrine, brought forth abundant fruits.

In summing up the meaning of the Russian Diaspora, Vladika John wrote in 1938: "In chastising the Russian people, the Lord at the same time showed it the path to salvation, by making it a preacher of Orthodoxy throughout the entire world" (Report to Sobor of 1938, Yugoslavia). But Vladika John himself went far beyond the "unconscious preaching of Orthodoxy" that characterizes most of the Russian Diaspora, to become a conscious apostle to the Western lands which, once enlightened by the Christian Faith, had now for centuries lain in the darkness of heterodoxy, and its even darker offshoots.

Vladika showed special concern for the several young movements of return to Orthodoxy from Western error, with results that it is yet too early to calculate. For now it may be said that the only Western Church with its own bishop and monasteries (the Netherlands Orthodox Church) regards Archbishop John as its founder: the genuine French Orthodox Church today has its own hierarchy, thanks to his patronage; the only Spanish Orthodox priest (Madrid Mission) was ordained by him; and as for America—another story in itself—one finds an ever-increasing realization of Archbishop John as a virtual patron saint of authentic American Orthodoxy.

Of the great services which the Blessed Archbishop John has rendered to the Orthodoxy of the West, one of the most important concerns the veneration of those early Western Saints whose names, owing to the later apostasy of the Church of Rome, were never included in Orthodox calendars. Out of his great love for all the Church's Saints, Vladika collected the lives and icons or portraits of the Western Saints also; and when by God's Providence he was appointed ruling Archbishop of Western Europe, one of his first acts was to establish the proper ecclesiastical foundation for the veneration of these Saints in the Orthodox Church. The list of 1952 given below must be understood as a preliminary and very incomplete one.

I.

The Veneration of Local Saints

This is the Resolution on the question of the veneration of Western Saints made by the Bishops of the Western European Archdiocese of the Russian Church Outside of Russia, under the presidency of Archbishop John Maximovitch:

The question of the veneration of local Saints was considered at the conference of bishops which was held in Geneva on September 16-17 (OS), 1952, with Archbishop John presiding.

At the last Sobor of Bishops (of the entire Russian Church Outside of Russia) in 1950, in connection with the question of giving permission for the veneration of St. Anschar, Enlightener of Denmark and Sweden, the Sobor decreed that it should be left up to the local bishops to clarify the question of each local Saint separately. With this as a basis the conference took up this question. Archbishop John related briefly the biography of St. Anschar, who had his See in Hamburg and Bremen; and from this it is evident that there are no reasons to doubt the sanctity of his life, his apostolic labors and the miracles from his relics. If the Lord Himself has glorified him, it would be brazenness on our part not to revere him as a Saint. Vladi-ka considers it essential to acknowledge that

St. Anschar is, in actuality, a God-pleasing Saint, who was glorified by the Orthodox Church in the West before its falling away from the Catholic Church, and therefore he should be glorified equally with other Saints. His memory is celebrated on February 3 (d. 865). The name of St. Anschar should henceforth be introduced into church calendars as a hierarch of the Church.

There are a number of other Saints in the West who should likewise be glorified equally with those Saints who have been glorified by the Orthodox Church in the East, since their veneration was established in profound antiquity. Among such Saints are:*

1. St. VICTOR, Martyr of Marseilles, d. 304. (July 21. St. John Cassian built a monastery over his tomb in the 5th century.)

2. St. POTHINUS, predecessor of St. Irenaeus as Bishop of Lyons. (Martyr, d. 177, June 2.)

3. Martyrs of Lyons: Sts. ALEXANDER (April 24) and EPIPODIUS (April 22). (Companions, martyred shortly after St. Pothinus; their relics were long kept together with those of St. Irenaeus); and St. BLANDINA and others (June 2, martyred with St. Pothinus in 177).

4. St. FELICIAN (Bishop of Foligno in Umbria, Italy; martyred 252, January 24).

5. St. GENEVIEVE, d. 512, January 3. (Virgin, consecrated to Christ by St. Germa-

* The information within parentheses has been supplied by the translators.

nus of Auxerre, renowned for miracles; Patroness of Paris.)

6. St. GERMANUS of Auxerre, d. 488, July 31. (Bishop, died in Ravenna; freed Britain from the Pelagian heresy.)

7. St. LUPUS of Troyes, d. 479. (Bishop and confessor; went with St. Germanus to Britain to combat the Pelagian heresy; Bishop of Troyes for 52 years.)

8. St. GERMANUS of Paris, d. 576, May 28. (First an abbot, then Bishop of Paris.)

9. St. CLOUD (Clodoald), d. 560, September 7. (Priest and Confessor; established a monastery near Paris.)

10. Preachers in Ireland, then in France, Switzerland, Italy, etc.: St. COLUMBAN (d. 615, Nov. 21; Abbot, founded many monasteries, including Luxeuil in France and Bobbio in Italy, where he died); St. FRIDOLIN (became a monk at Poitiers and spread the veneration of St. Hilary; then a missionary in Switzerland and on the Upper Rhine; d. 7th century, March 6); and St. GALL (a disciple of St. Columban, a hermit in Switzerland; d. 646, October 16).

11. St. CLOTILDE, Queen of France, d. 545. (June 3; by her prayers her husband, Clovis, King of the Franks, received the faith of Christ.)

12. St. HILARY of Poitiers. (Bishop and Confessor; led the battle against Arianism in the West; d. 368, January 13.)

13. St. HONORATUS of Lerins. (Founder of the Monastery of Lerins, then Archbishop of Arles; d. 429, January 16.)

14. St. VINCENT of Lerins, Teacher of the Church. (Priest, author of the *Commonitorium*; d.c. 450, May 24.)

15. St. PATRICK, Enlightener of Ireland. (Bishop and Confessor, ordained Bishop by St. Germanus of Auxerre; first to preach Christ in Ireland; d.c. 461, March 17.)

The following Resolution was made concerning the question of the veneration of Western Saints: Revering the memory of the Saints who have pleased God, and finding in the places of our Diaspora missionaries and ascetics of antiquity whose names were not known to us, we glorify the Lord, wondrous in His Saints, and venerate those who have pleased Him, extolling their sufferings and ascetic labors and calling upon them to be our intercessors and intermediaries with God. In view of this we established that the above-mentioned righteous ones be revered by the entire Orthodox Church, and we call upon pastors and flock to revere these Saints and to hasten to their intercession of prayer.

II.

*Blessed John in France:
Reminiscences of His
Spiritual Daughter*

by Zinaida V. Julem

EDITOR'S PREFACE

The period of Blessed John's life in France has so far been obscure, and not much information about it has been available. A devoted spiritual daughter of his, the author of these memoirs, Zinaida V. Julem, fills in this gap, giving us a view from the "inside" and disclosing the mystical world of perhaps the holiest man of the 20th century. Surely a prophet of such calibre could not get by without evoking envy and hatred, just as did the prophets of old. But to conceal this righteous man from the view of the thirsting new generation would be a sin, because the glory of God, revealed in the lives of the righteous, serves to enkindle that divine fire which Christ our Lord wishes to have burning upon this earth (Luke 12:49).

The following spiritual portrait of Blessed John comes from a simple, loving heart, guarded by the Patristic awareness of sobriety. Realizing that Blessed John was touched

by Divinity and was in contact with the mind of his Creator, the author was able to peer into the mystery of his sanctity. Although her observations only give us glimpses, they offer clear testimony to the close presence of the other world for which the Holy Orthodox Church prepares its children, and to the ability of God's Saints to penetrate that realm even while on earth. That mystery, that revelation beyond our glimpses, remains hidden in God. It is opened to those who, like Blessed John, ascend on the wings of divine love for God and their neighbor. And those of us who watch from below are given renewed hope and the inspiration to increase our upward striving.

Father Herman

1. MY FIRST MEETING

I will begin my account with how I first met Archbishop John. Matushka Helen Dimitrievna Solodovnikova used to tell me many stories about the elders of Optina and I began to desire to be able to meet one of such elders. At that time I had many difficulties of all kinds and I was imploring God that He send me such an elder. About the same time I found out from someone that Father Theodore Bokach was going to Mount Athos and I approached him with a request that he ask Father Archimandrite Nicholas, the Abbot of St. Elias Skete on Mount Athos, to allow me to write to him seeking spiritual direction. But when Father Theodore returned he informed me that the abbot blessed me to turn with my

request to Archbishop John Maximovitch, adding: "You have your own saint, Blessed John."

The wife of General Polovtsev, Natalia Ivanovna, our good friend, told me that he often served in Medone and that in a few days he would serve and give a talk in Paris. We agreed to go there together.

In expectation of the Archbishop, my mother anticipated to see a stately hierarch, like the ones she used to see in St. Alexander Nevsky Lavra in Petersburg in Russia, but when she heard that the bishop had arrived and saw a short gray-haired elder in a white cassock with an uncovered head, in amazement she loudly exclaimed, "Why that's dear Seraphim of Sarov!" At this he turned in our direction, bent his head a little to one side and meekly smiled. But Matushka Solodovnikova, when she saw him for the first time earlier in Cannes, as they were vesting him before Liturgy in the middle of the church, thought to herself: What an extraordinary hierarch—and a fool-for-Christ at that." Suddenly at this moment he turned his head back, looked her over from head to foot and smiled at her. She was shocked at his clairvoyance and only feared that she might have thought something bad about him.

Soon after that Matushka Solodovnikova and I went to Versailles, to the Cadet Corps, where he was staying. We stood through the whole Liturgy and at the end approached to venerate the Cross. The bishop was distributing antidorion himself. He at once gave Matushka a large piece, but before giving

one to me he began to hesitate and very slowly selected a piece for me, so that I began to fear and think he did not want to give me antidorion. Mentally I begged God that he would not deprive me of it. Finally he selected a piece and gave it to me. Then he blessed us, made us drink some holy water and we left.

2. A HOLY ELDER IN FULL TRADITION

Soon I again visited the bishop, but this time alone. At that time I was offered a position to work in a Children's Home in Mongeron, because I was seeking employment and a place where I could stay with my nephew, who was entrusted to my guardianship. I did not particularly want to go there, where children were kept under a very rigid surveillance, but I had no other alternative. Besides, the lady who worked there before me already left the job. Thus I wanted from the bishop only a blessing to go to Mongeron, but in actuality I was drawn to him in my heart.

Having arrived in Versailles at his place, I was conducted to his cell. He lived in a small room, whose walls were all covered with wooden gratings of little boxes which were filled with bundles of letters tied with strings; and under each box there was a number. Near the window next to a small table there was a rather deep armchair in which he sat facing the window. In the corner by the door there was a large bag with dry prosphoras. When I came in he got up,

came up to me and blessed me, and I began to talk to him. I said:

"Your Eminence, bless me to accept the job at Mongeron and go there to live." I was sure that he would bless, but he thought for a while and answered:

"No, it is better to go to Chalifere." He then began to look for something in his little address book. I stood there thinking that I had never even heard of this Chalifere and did not pay any attention to his words. During the time of this conversation the poor man was standing and I did not even think of asking him to sit down in his armchair. I only now remembered about it. He gave me many pieces of advice and after that he would appear to me several times in my dreams telling me what to do. And all that he told me came true, as if he had known all beforehand. Then I did not fully realize that he had a gift of clairvoyance from God. He apparently hid it so humbly and unnoticeably that we who came to him would not guess about it, because at that time I was not amazed even at the following:

I met Blessed John in 1958 and my father died on May 7th, 1957, on Bright Wednesday. Not long before that my father had said, "Today some monk visited me; he was short in stature, all in black." I thought for a long time who could it have been, but since at that time I did not know Blessed John, I did not solve that question.

Now at Blessed John's, I thought: what a pity that I did not know him then when my father was sick; he would have prayed him

back to health. At this moment he said to me, "You know, I visited your father in the hospital." And at this time he opened up his little address book to a certain page and read aloud the name, patronymic and last name of my father, saying, "Here, I found it—Basil Maximovitch Julem."

But he did not even know my last name; how could he have known and read my thoughts if he were not clairvoyant? That meant that my father was destined not to get well.

Before leaving, I asked him to give me a prosphora. He began to dig in the sack with the dry prosphoras, finally selected one of the "Nine Orders" and gave it to me. He also blessed me with a paper icon of the Lesna Mother of God. At that time I still did not know about the Lesna Convent. Then he took me to church, gave me holy water to drink and said that he must go to Paris. I became overjoyed, thinking that I would go together with him. He walked very fast and I thought that he perhaps did not want me to go with him. Nevertheless I tried not to lag behind him too far. When we came to the stop, the taxi still was not there. He blessed me, but when the taxi arrived it turned out that there was only one seat left. He asked me if I was in a hurry? I, of course, said I was not. Then he sat down and kept blessing me for a long time until the taxi disappeared from sight.

The following day I went to see Matushka Solodovnikova and she showed me a photograph, saying: "Why don't you go to Chali-

fere?" She told me that it was a Russian Children's Home, which was under the patronage of Archbishop John. I at once liked the description of this Home. But what could I do? To refuse accepting the job in Mongeron, when the position was vacant and no one to replace me, was not right. With a heavy heart I walked that Sunday to meet the lady to whom I had to promise that I would go to Mongeron. So I came, greeted the lady, trying to smile and said, "I accept your offer." I saw that the lady was not too happy, so I asked what was the matter. She told me that the woman who worked there before had suddenly changed her mind and wanted the job back. "Glory be to God!" With what joy I crossed myself—as if a heavy stone had been taken off my shoulders. Thus I went to Châlifere according to the words of Blessed John.

3. ST. JOHN OF KRONSTADT

Here is how my nephew was given to me. Still before my meeting Blessed John, I saw a dream. It seemed as if I was standing in a large church and saw somebody's Sepulchre, and I knew in my mind that this was the sarcophagus of the Righteous John of Kronstadt. And suddenly I saw Father John getting up from his coffin. Having gotten up, he quickly went and hid himself behind a column. Everybody around there began to shout: Where is Father John? They did not know that he was alive. And I ran behind the column and looked at him. He asked me what I wanted, not openly, but as if with his

eyes, and I answered: "Father John, bless me!" He blessed me and I woke up.

At once I remembered that I still wanted him to bless my family, because a long time ago Father John blessed my mother to go to a monastery. She wanted very much to go into his convent on Karpovka, but then she met my father and soon they decided to get married. My father went to Kronstadt to get the blessing from Father John and stayed there for three days in hope of seeing him, but returned not having seen him. Perhaps Father John did not want to bless this marriage because just previously he had blessed mother for monasticism. Mother often would even joke, saying, "Our family is an 'unblessed' one." This often upset me and I wanted Father John to bless our family. And soon I fell asleep again and saw that it was as if Father John was sitting on a sofa and myself next to him. And I was imploring him: "Batiushka John, bless our family." He smiled and blessed. Then I decided to ask him to bless me to go to a monastery. But then I saw that he did not want to do it, and he said to me, not using language, but again with his eyes, as it were, "For his sake you must remain here;" and he pointed to the wall. And I saw how out of this wall there gradually emerged an infant. I began to cry bitter tears and woke up. Soon the wife of my brother gave birth to a baby boy and became sick with tuberculosis, and I was given my nephew to bring him up when he still was not even a month old. These dreams I saw before the canonization of Righteous John.

So I went to Chalifere and was very happy living there with him. That was the best time in my life. But then came a big temptation. My mother for some strange reason began to call me all the time to go back home. She would insist: "Come back, it is very difficult for me without you." She would even call me on the telephone practically every day. I asked Blessed John what to do, and he answered, "better stay." Then I still did not know that one should be absolutely attentive to Blessed John, as to one of the Optina elders, who were receptive to God's will directly. But because I was brought up in complete obedience to my parents, I went home. As soon as I arrived, mother said, "Why did yo come?" But it was too late; I could not go back again, my place was already taken. So I had to submit myself to the will of God. But from that time on such trouble assailed me that, if it were not for Blessed John's prayers, I for certain would have not endured at all. At approximately that time Blessed John began at our church free trapeza meals after services, to which I afterwards dedicated my whole life. He was a holy man and I treasured every minute of my association with him. At times it would happen that he would come down to have tea, and I, busy all day long, would then have a chance to ask him many questions, which had arisen and gathered in my mind during the day—but I would forget what the questions were. Then he, sitting quietly with his head bent low, would softly speak, as if to himself, answering all my unuttered ques-

tions! I would stand there behind him in total amazement, not daring to take a breath. Those were unforgettable moments.

4. A GIFT OF CLAIRVOYANCE FROM GOD

After my first talk with Blessed John I tried to see him more often. I always tried to get to Lesna Convent when he would be serving there; I went there to receive Holy Communion. On the eve I read the prayer rule before Communion and went to bed peacefully, thinking that tomorrow I would receive Communion from Blessed John. In the morning, though, while finishing reading the prayers, I heard a commotion downstairs. It turned out that Blessed John had to go urgently to Paris. I fell into despondency from disappointment, and everything turned sour. So I decided to mentally implore Blessed John, "Take me with you, take me with you," fearing even to go downstairs since I would burst into tears before the bishop. Suddenly I heard that someone was calling the Abbess and saying to her, "Zina must urgently return home to Paris. But how, when at this early hour there is no train available?" Standing there in the room behind the closed door and hearing this, I thought that my heart would burst from happiness. I was still upstairs, still waiting to be called, while pretending that I knew nothing. And how strange!—I did not even for a minute think that something could have gone wrong at home. Soon they came for me. I pretended that I was very concerned and was getting ready. I came downstairs. There around the car the whole convent was gathered and ev-

everybody seemed to be a bit troubled. I came to the car; there was only one free seat left, just for me. I sat down and, accompanied by everybody's singing the travelling prayer, *Guardian Angel*, we departed.

Just think, Blessed John did not even ask me where I must get off to go home! But as for me, I was not thinking of anything except that I was happy and that I was travelling with the blessed man. We arrived at the church: they vested him, then the service began, then I received Holy Communion, then the service ended and he was finally divested. The people crowded around him and he got into the car, blessed us all and disappeared... I came home utterly happy, fulfilled as if a bit drunk. They call it *grace to overflowing*. Nobody at home was expecting me. They were even surprised that I got home so quickly. What could it have been, my "urgent" departure from Lesna? But I did not even bother to find out. Mystically I understood, if you can call it understanding:

He heard my plea and made a miracle.

5. SPIRITUAL VIGILANCE

While I was in the company of such a man as Blessed John, the spiritual reality of the closeness of the other world began gradually to dawn upon me. I began to be drawn closer into the realm of grace, only to experience the pain of tribulation and sorrow with ever increasing strength.

Another time I went to the Convent when Blessed John was not there, but I stay-

ed there overnight. At that time I had a lot of temptations. That night I saw a dream. I saw that I was standing at the door of the Convent's guesthouse and looking through the open gates and out into the street. There Blessed John was coming into the Convent. As he entered, he turned to me and said, "Watch out! Be vigilant!" I was startled and at once looked through the gates on the other side of the street, and I saw there three unclean spirits—all black, dressed in tights; one was tall and heavy, the other tall and very thin and the third of medium height and somehow fat. All three had their hands in their pockets and made believe that they did not pay any attention to me. I woke up.

After this dream my temptations began to increase, and each time that I had serious temptations I heard Blessed John's voice: "Watch out! Be vigilant!" And every time in those terrible moments he saved me.

6. DELIVERANCE FROM DEATH

There was another remarkable incident, about which one could say that Blessed John saved me from certain death. On that particular day, because I had to go out, I looked out from the window and saw that in front of our entrance way and between two cars there was some strange, curious object, similar to a piece of pipe, about a foot long and four inches in diameter—it's hard for me to say exactly. "What a strange thing that is!" I thought, and curiosity got the best of me. "Why don't I go down and just touch it with my foot, see what it is?" So I began to get

dressed, but then I really paid little attention to it, when all of a sudden the doorbell rang. I opened the door and there was our dear bishop! What would his unexpected call bring, I thought.

Blessed John came in and proceeded through the corridor into the room, not saying anything. Then he sat down in the arm-chair. I began to busy myself around him, not knowing what to say or do. He was silent and I was silent. Thus he sat for about five minutes and then got up, blessed me and left. I stood there perplexed—what in the world was the meaning of all this? Then my attention was drawn back to the front window, where outside by this time a truck had arrived at our front door and a group of policemen were busying themselves. Some men very carefully picked up that curious object which I just recently had wanted to touch, placed it into the vehicle and cautiously departed. I went outside to find out what was going on.

At that time in Paris there were many terrorist bombings, and that object was one of these bombs! What would have happened to me if I would have gone out and touched it with my foot as I had intended to do but had been prevented by the inexplicable visit by our dear Blessed John, to whom my intent had been revealed? That day he surely saved my life.

7. "VARENNIKI"

Blessed John lived in a house in Paris by this time, not far from where we lived.

Every day I would run there bringing food, which was prepared by Mother. He liked very much cheese dumplings, called in Ukrainian *varenniki*. Once Mother made these *varenniki* for him and placed them on our table for me to take to him. At this moment my uncle Alex came in and looked at these *varenniki* in such a way that it was evident that he wanted to eat them up. Evidently he thought to himself: "They would not make them for me, but for the bishop they would." And it was true that at that time we were tight with money and whatever best food we could get Mother would always use for the bishop.

So this time I brought to him these *varenniki* with great joy, thinking that he would surely enjoy eating them. And what do you think he did?

The holy bishop sat down at the table, ate unwillingly a little bit of other food, but would not even touch these *varenniki*. And no matter how much I tried to offer them to him, no matter how I pleaded with him that he should taste them, at that particular time he did not touch any of these *varenniki*. Evidently he felt how much my uncle Alex wanted to eat them.

8. THE SUITCASE

In the same house in which Blessed John had his residence, there also lived his main priest, Archimandrite Mitrofan, who originally came from the city of Voronezh and whom blessed John tonsured into monasticism, giving him the new monastic name of his city's patron saint, St. Mitrofan. This good

father was absolutely dedicated to Blessed John and understood that his hierarch was a living, genuine saint, misunderstood by many churchmen simply because they did not know about real saints and how they behave. This caused a lot of harrassing of the saint and unnecessary commotion. The saint, however, knew much intuitively, but often did not speak of it, relying on God's providence.

Once after service, Father Mitrofan and those who attended the services remained in the church a bit longer and Father Mitrofan began to tell us that a whole campaign was being raised against our dear bishop, actually a veritable persecution, and that they wanted to remove him from Paris. Some people wrote to the Synod, asking that Archbishop John be transferred to Brussels. We all became terribly upset and did not know what to do. Finally we decided to sign a petition and sent it off to the Synod at once. But it did not help because after several days the Synodal decree arrived, assigning him to Brussels. We were terribly saddened and, as usual, helpless and frightened.

But Mother Magdalena was indignant and took it very hard. She got busy and sent me a whole suitcase full of the Archbishop's riassons and cassocks, since she was in charge of this department. She loved the Blessed One dearly, and very sternly declared to me that I should put all his clothing in proper order and into one suitcase and to make absolutely sure that I send it with the Archbishop. She strictly instructed that under no condition was it to remain here.

I did as she told me. But when I brought the suitcase before the Archbishop's departure, he took all others, but this one he would not take. I insisted that he take it, because I was afraid that Mother Magdalena would be very angry with me. The Archbishop made an attempt to protest, but, encountering my firm resistance, took that suitcase unwillingly and left.

Soon it turned out that the Archbishop was transferred again back to Paris and returned. He brought back all his suitcases, except the one I had handed to him. It had gotten lost and it was never found.

9. A TRIP TO RUSSIA

Matushka Solodovnikova and her son Alyosha decided to go to Russia and they came to Blessed John to get a blessing for the journey. At first he did not particularly want to bless them, but later he did. But when they left, he at once spent the whole night in prayer. I found out about it the next morning, because when I came the neighbors downstairs complained that he had kept walking all night long and they heard him praying. A few days later I was in church and heard how Blessed John, doing the commemoration at the proscomedia, loudly prayed for the "severely suffering Helen and Alexis!" I was surprised. On the next day, or even the same day, we received a telegram, in which I read that Matushka had fallen in the metro escalator while in Moscow and was seriously wounded and in a hospital, and that Alyosha was in despair and did not

One of those who went with Blessed John to the airport described the scene there: "Those of us who saw him during the last year of his life could clearly observe how he was melting away before our eyes, how his strength was leaving, how all his energy was being drained by the persecution. He was in such a terrible state that it was apparent what the persecution was doing to him. For the last year before his death he was unrecognizable. He was often very serious. Being clairvoyant, he of course knew that he was leaving us forever, but we did not know this. I saw him off at the airport and was even allowed to accompany him into the plane. He was especially serious; he could not even talk. When I told him just before entering the plane, 'Please look back, your flock is looking at you with love,' he turned around sadly and three times blessed us all for the last time. And we never saw him again. Early that summer one of his spiritual sons received a letter from him, stating, 'If you hear that I have died, know that I was killed.' And shortly thereafter we heard the sad news that our dear Blessed John died."

As a rule I would never go to sleep at night when I knew that Blessed John would be flying away, since I knew the exact time when his airplane would fly over our house and he would unfailingly bless the city from above. And so this night also I waited until midnight and saw him off after all in that way, and then went to bed and fell asleep. And I saw a beautiful dream. I saw

in Rotterdam to Archbishop Basil of Brussels. Bishop Dionissy died in 1976. In the meantime, however, important changes had been arranged in the Moscow jurisdiction. In 1971, Bishop Jacob of the Dutch Orthodox Church became head of the Moscow Patriarchate parishes.

Bishop Jacob (Akkevsvdike), originally a Benedictine monk of the Roman Catholic Church, was received in 1940 into the Russian Orthodox Church, together with his friend and fellow-monk Adriaan, by Archimandrite Dionissy. In 1946, they founded the first Dutch language parish, the Orthodox Church of St. John the Baptist, followed in 1954 by the Monastery of St. John the Baptist. The chief purpose of the Monastery has been the Orthodox mission to the Dutch people, translating the Divine Service books into Dutch, and celebrating the entire daily cycle of services in the Dutch language according to the Typicon.

In 1950, Fr. Adriaan unfortunately became ill with tuberculosis and was sent to Switzerland to convalesce until 1953. He used that time for making translations of the Orthodox services into Dutch. The Divine Liturgy and the services of Vespers and Matins, together with other rites from the Orthodox service books, translated into the Dutch language and carried out in the usual Orthodox manner, have all been found appropriate to the worshipping needs of Dutch congregations.

This gigantic labor of translation ended in 1984, when the last book, the General

of his servants is being cultivated. But again the grace of God is sent in such measure to no other city but this one, for here lived a true vessel of the Holy Spirit in the form of a frail and unattractive little man—Archbishop John Maximovitch, who spent his last years in San Francisco and whose relics are enshrined in a sepulchre under the majestic cathedral which he completed in this city.

During his lifetime Archbishop John was regarded as a saint; many people sent requests for his prayers from all over the world, and many testified to obvious miraculous help. After his death his sepulchre became indeed a holy place; thousands of people visit it annually; by mail many request that prayers be said before his tomb; people send for the ends of candles burned before the tomb for them, and also for drops of oil from the vigil lamp burning there. Every year on the anniversary of Vladika's death, June 19 (July 2), the Divine Liturgy is served in the sepulchre; then, despite the early hour (about dawn), the sepulchre is overflowing with the faithful, and virtually all receive Holy Communion.

The Cathedral, with its five golden domes, is dedicated to the miracle-working Icon of the Mother of God, *The Joy of All Who Sorrow*; it is located on Geary Boulevard, between 26th and 27th Avenues, and is a dominating feature of the northwest part of San Francisco, being visible from many parts of town as well as to travellers approaching by ocean or over the Golden Gate Bridge. The Sepulchre is two stories down under the al-



With clergy of the Orthodox Church of the Netherlands. Left to right: Hieromonk Jacob, Archbishop John, Hieromonk Adriaan (see pg. 155-169).



Amidst members of the French Orthodox Church. At right, the future Bishop Jean-Nectaire Kovalevsky, whom Archbishop John consecrated.



French icon of Blessed John.



The button made by venerated of Blessed John.
(See "The Miracle of the Button," pp. 403-405.)

next to him were seriously injured. Neither was he harmed when he fell into an enemy trap, although he had to wrestle with the Vietcong, and even received a minor wound. Having completed his assignment on the front line, and being transferred to another mission, he met his happy parents at a Hawaii airport. Only then did he fully realize how well he had been guarded and protected by the prayers and portrait of Blessed John.

In life nothing occurs by chance. The holy icon of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple, by then donated to the Sepulchre, turned out to have a special significance there, which they had previously not known. This feast day was Archbishop John's favorite of all the celebrations of the Most Holy Mother of God; he was tonsured in Yugoslavia in a monastery dedicated to this holy day; on the same feast day he arrived at his first episcopal see in the Shanghai cathedral, dedicated to the Mother of God Icon, "Surety of Sinners"; and years later on this same feast day he arrived at his last episcopal see in the San Francisco cathedral, also of the Mother of God, the "Joy of All Who Sorrow."

Reader Gleb Podmoshensky
January, 1968
Gilroy, California

good health ever since. The faithful all rejoiced in the miracle."

Peter Herrin
Burlingame, California
February 2, 1976

14.

Help in Stopping Bleeding

"In the night into January 1, n.s., after praying to Blessed Vladika John Maximovitch and applying some oil from the lamp burning in his Sepulchre, on arising from sleep on January 1st I found that the bleeding which I had been experiencing for two days had stopped. Our Lord is glorified in His Saints!"

Marina Prokopchuk
New Jersey
January, 1976

15.

"Pray for the Sick"

"This past Monday evening I had a dream about Blessed Vladika John of San Francisco, which I shall never forget as long as I shall live. It was the sort of a dream that I wished would not end, and I awoke with such joy and happiness, and I felt so unworthy that he should come to me in a dream. Blessed Vladika had on his cassock and his panagia. He was bent over looking at me sort of sideways, his hair was black with streaks of grey hair, and he had taken off his glasses and said that he was happy for

28.

Deliverance from Meningitis

Dear Father,

Here is the translation of the miracles that Archbishop John has worked here. Excuse me, please, for the translation, but I will do my best.

My little niece, two years old, lay in bed with a high fever. The doctor came again and again, but nothing helped her. He made the decision that she must be hospitalized. The doctor specialist stated immediately that she had severe meningitis. The chance of recovery was very small, and if there was a recovery, she would suffer great damage.

It was Saturday evening. With great sorrow we went to the church for the All-night Vigil. During the office we prayed to Vladika John. We promised that if she was healed, we would burn a perpetual lamp before his icon. For the doctors it was a big surprise that on Sunday morning the little child was without fever, and she healed totally so that there was no damage at all. Since then, the perpetual lamp before Vladika John's icon is burning in the church of the convent.

A friend, who is a Roman priest, had heard of the holy life of our Archbishop John. He asked for a photograph of him. One day a nurse came to him who was addicted to morphine. She was married and had children. She asked the priest to help her. She

"The "Discovery" of Metropolitan Anthony

THE HOLY CHILDHOOD of Archbishop John, and his deep contact with the living sources of Holy Russia, were the foundation of the sanctity of his mature years. But there was one man who guided, who inspired, and pushed him in the particular direction of serving the Church of Christ as monk, priest, bishop and theologian. This was the great hierarch of the first part of this century, leading candidate to become Patriarch in 1918, and first Chief Hierarch of the Russian Church Outside of Russia: Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky.



Young Michael Maximovitch came to Kharkov to attend Law School at the age of 18 in the very year (1914) when Metropolitan (the Archbishop) Anthony was assigned to be ruling bishop of

this important city. In the brief three years which Metropolitan Anthony spent at this post he so gained the heart and trust of the young student, and so inspired him with the ideals of service to the Church and to Russia, that one may well say that it was he who formed the future hierarch. Later, in the years of banishment in Serbia, it was MA who tonsured him a monk and called him to be priest and then bishop, and who so grew to love him that he sent him to be bishop in Shanghai in 1934 "as my own soul, as my own heart."

The way in which MA inspired and influenced Archbishop John is best told in the latter's own words, in his article based on personal experience, describing Metropolitan Anthony's years in Kharkov:

(Translated from *Orthodox Way* Jordanville 1950, pp. 6–9.)

"A special love and concern was evoked in Archbishop Anthony by young people. The students of the Theological Academies who passed through Kharkov made use of the Bishop's House as their own... Vladiika received them all with great cordiality, furnished them room and board and even money for innocent amusements. And in the evenings, having finished his diocesan business, he would call to his quarters all the guests and would spend time with them in instructive conversation until late at night.

"The seeds sown by Vladika fell deeply into the young souls. After leaving the hospitable Kharkov Bishop's House, they often remembered it later, many entered into correspondence

with Vladika, told their friends about him, and they likewise strove to enter into personal or written contact with Vladijka.

" Vladika strove to influence the working out of an Orthodox Christian world outlook in the students of secular institutions of learning also, and in every way possible he aided their moral education. When visiting the house churches of the educational institutions and celebrating Divine services there, he would always deliver profoundly instructive sermons directed to the mind and heart of teachers and students. Even young people who were far from the Church felt the spiritual gaze of Vladika directed upon them. This is why, when in 1914 the threatening events moving against Russia and the Slavic peoples evoked a patriotic enthusiasm among the youth, the student demonstration was directed precisely to the Bishop's House. Coming out onto the balcony of the second floor, in which the Bishop's Quarters were located, Archbishop Anthony addressed the students with a profound talk in which he expressed his view of Russian young people and his faith that in the depth of their soul they were always grateful and patriotic, while the contrary currents among them were only an imported temporary phenomenon."

Above all young Michael was influenced and inspired by Archbishop Anthony's religious enthusiasm and loving pastoral care for young people. He continues his account (speaking of himself, although in the third person):

"Being concerned for the raising of the general moral level of young people, Vladika did not leave without attention each separate young person whom he happened to see; he would speak warmly with such a one. And if he happened to discover that anyone was so inclined that he might receive special benefit from himself, Vladika strove to seek out and see this person.



†July 28/August 10,
1936

"Once Archbishop Anthony was informed that one of the leading representatives of the gentry of Kharkov province had as eldest son, a student, who was very interested in spiritual questions. Vladika did not delay in asking the father to bring the son to him. This was an unheard-of thing in Kharkov at the time, for not just anyone even among those of public position would dare to go to the Archbishop himself, who always had a number of visitors on business... Some months passed. The Archbishop's invitation was forgotten. Archbishop Anthony was invited to serve a moleben at one gathering in which the above-mentioned representative of the gentry participated. At the end of the moleben he went to receive the Archbishop's blessing. 'Why are you hiding your son from me?' Vladika asked. 'Are you afraid I will make him a monk?' Thunderstruck that the Archbishop should remember his son, the father affirmed that he was not hiding him, but that he had not considered it possible or convenient to bring a young person to an Archbishop so overburdened by important business. 'No, you must absolutely bring him; only then will I believe you,' Vladika said. Returning home from the gathering, the father told this news, which astonished everyone...

"Somewhat upset by the situation, the father now decided to bring the son to the Archbishop, but it was literally as if something were hindering this. First the son became ill, then the father had to go away from Kharkov on business. And the visit to the Archbishop was put off to some indefinite time.

"Once Archbishop Anthony was giving a lecture in the Landowners' Hall. Among the listeners was that same student. During the intermission, he went to receive Vladika's blessing. Those standing around Vladika indicated that this was the one about whom Vladika had spoken with his father. 'So it's you whom your parents are hiding from me!' Vladika cried out, embracing him. The latter replied that they were not hiding him at all, a proof of which was his very presence at the lecture. 'Then tell your father that he must absolutely come to me with you.'

"After this nothing was left for the father but to go to the Archbishop with his son. Archbishop Anthony was not long in returning the visit and, not finding the parents home, but discovering that the children were home, he entered the house all the same, blessing the children and conversing with them,

"From that time on this whole family began to be in close contact with Vladika, coming to love their Archpastor warmly, and for all the years that followed they were spiritually guided by him. The young man whom Vladika had 'discovered,' having been spiritually educated under his guidance and direction, is now a bishop of the Russian Church Outside of Russia."

Archbishop Nikon of Washington and Florida, another spiritual son of Metropolitan Anthony, in his memoirs of Archbishop John (in the *Chronicle* of Bishop Savva, ch. 29), notes that the

younger hierarch put into practice the pedagogical method which he learned from Metropolitan Anthony: "The essence of this pedagogical method consists in a personal concern, and education filled with care for each student, and the uncovering of spiritual life in his soul. The young Hieromonk John assimilated this method completely and joined it to a limitless labor of prayer..." And indeed, religiously-inclined young people who knew Vladika John can testify to the great interest and care he took in inspiring them with Orthodox fervor and drawing them into the service of the Church, igniting in them the flame which had been kindled in his own soul by the warm heart of Metropolitan Anthony.